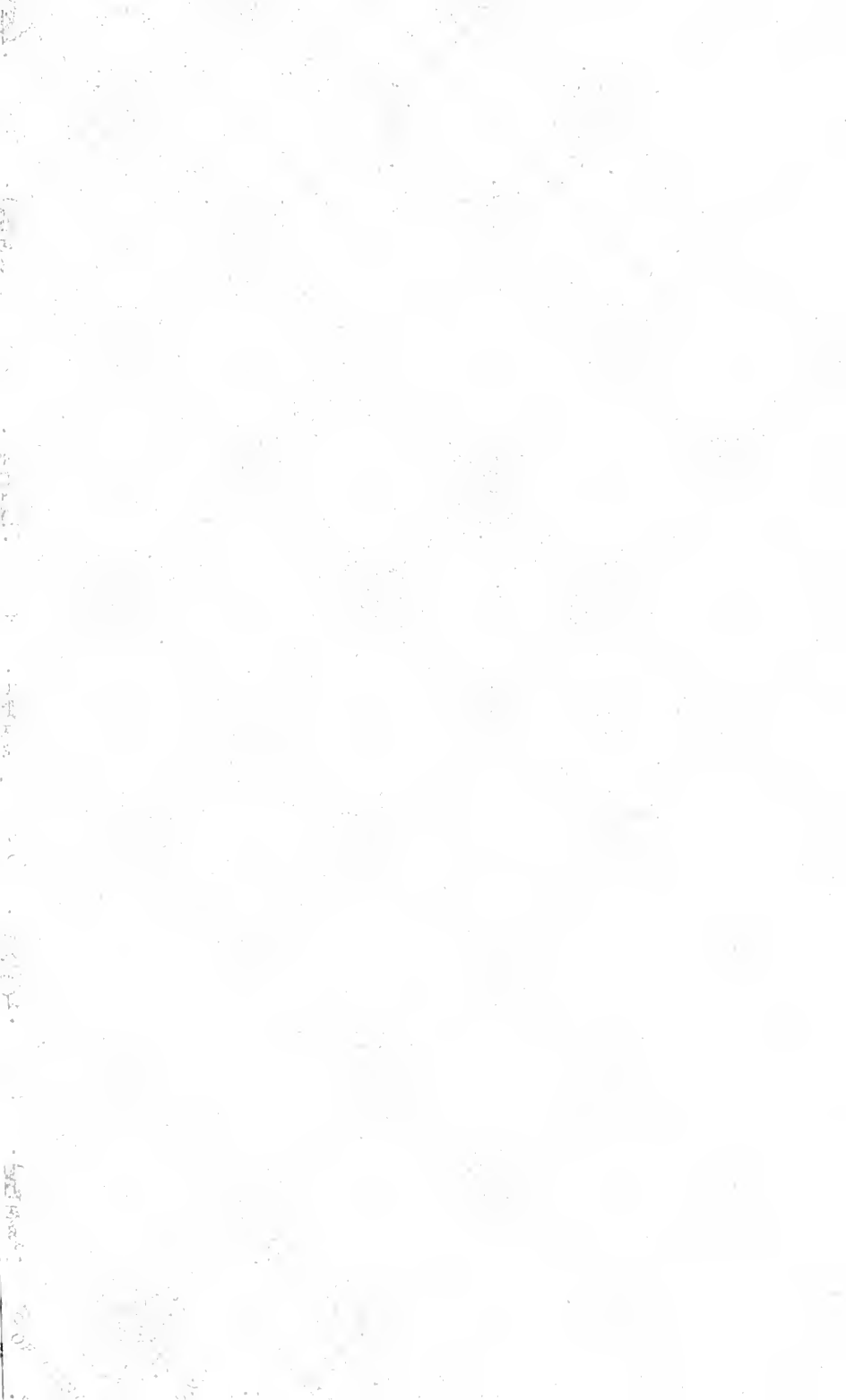


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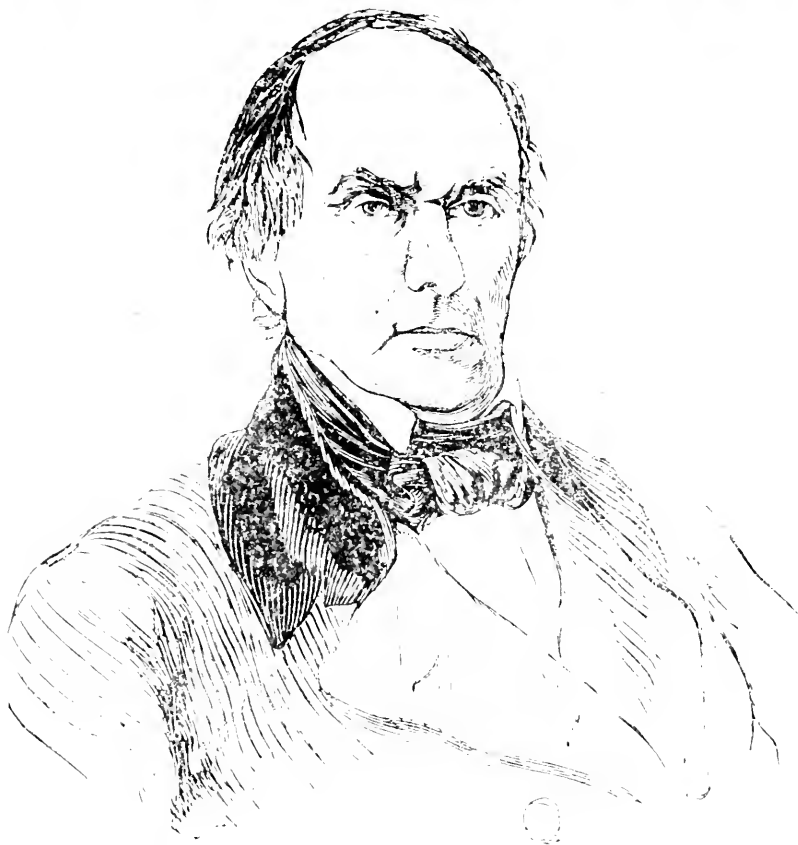
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PERSONAL MEMORIALS
OF
DANIEL WEBSTER.



He that hath the vantage-ground to do good is an honest man — Bacon.

PHILADELPHIA:
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO AND CO.,

NO. 11 NORTH FOURTH STREET.

*And for sale by Fittell & Co., Phillips, Sampson & Co., Boston;
Stringer & Townsend, Dewitt & Davenport,
Long & Brother, New York.*

1852.

PERSONAL MEMORIALS

OF

DANIEL WEBSTER.

He that hath the vantage ground to do good — an honest man

PHILADELPHIA:
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO AND CO.,
SUCCESSORS TO GRIGG, ELLIOT AND CO.
1851.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

THE compiler of this little volume lately visited *Elms Farm*, in New Hampshire, and *Marshfield*, in Massachusetts, as the friend and guest of their distinguished proprietor; and, while in their vicinity, it was natural that he should have had opportunities of gathering, from the older inhabitants and other authentic sources, many incidents of personal history. These were, for the most part, repeated to him for his own gratification; but he has deemed it his duty to present them to the public for their edification and pleasure. He does this upon his own responsibility, and hopes to be excused for thus trespassing upon the rights of hospitality. In defence of himself, he pleads the fact that the fame of DANIEL WEBSTER, as a patriot, a jurist, a statesman, an orator, and a scholar, is co-extensive with the civilized world, and it cannot but be of essential service to the rising generation, and agreeable to all admirers of intellectual greatness, to become acquainted with some of those facts which tend to illustrate the every-day life and personal character of such a man. The passages of the volume, which do not now appear for the first time, will be generally found credited to their several authors.

WASHINGTON CITY, *Autumn of 1851.*

PERSONAL MEMORIALS OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

The ancestors of DANIEL WEBSTER came originally from Scotland, and his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, were named Ebenezer, and were descendants of Thomas Webster, who was one of the very earliest settlers of New Hampshire. His father was a person of large and stalwart form, of swarthy complexion, and remarkable features. He was born and spent his youth on a farm; served as a ranger in the famous company of Major Robert Rogers, and as a captain, under General John Stark, during the revolutionary war; was for several years a member of the legislature of New Hampshire, and died while performing with honor the duties of judge of the court of common pleas. His mother was Abigail Eastman, a lady of Welsh extraction, and of far more than ordinary intellect; she was the second wife of her husband, and the mother of five children—two boys, Daniel and Ezekiel, and three daughters.

Ebenezer Webster, the father of Daniel, was not only a man of superior intellect, but was distinguished for his strong and indomitable will, a characteristic which his distinguished son has rightfully inherited. He was a federalist in politics; and it is related of him, that he was once taken suddenly ill while passing through a village which was noted for its democracy, and that supposing he was about to die, he beseeched his physician to remove him as soon as possible out of the place, giving, as a reason for his great anxiety, that "he was born a federalist, had lived a federalist, and could not die in any but a federalist town."

DANIEL WEBSTER was born on the 18th day of January, 1782, in the town of Salisbury, Merrimac county, then Hillsborough. New Hampshire. The site of the house is two and a half miles from the beautiful Merrimac river, and in the immediate vicinity of that where his father built the first log cabin ever seen in this section of country, and at a time when, between his residence and the borders of Canada, there was not a single human habitation, excepting the Indian's wigwam. The house in question is not now standing; but the engraving which ornaments the title page of this volume,* is from a drawing correctly representing it as it appeared only a few years ago. It was a good specimen of the more elegant

* The plate alluded to does not appear in this pamphlet edition.

farm houses of the day, one story high, heavily timbered, clapboarded, with rather a pointed roof, one chimney in the centre, one front door, with a window on either side, three windows at each end, four rooms on the ground floor, and an addition in the rear for a kitchen. It fronted on the south, a picturesque well-curb and sweep stood near the eastern extremity, and over the whole a mammoth elm tree extended its huge arms, as if to protect the spot from sacrilege. In the rear, on a hill side, was a spacious barn, and a partially wooded pasture; the prospect immediately in front was enlivened by a rude bridge, spanning a lovely little stream, and bounded by a lofty hill, upon which is still standing the church where Mr. WEBSTER was baptized; while in a southwesterly direction was presented a full view of the noble mountain, called *Kearsage*, which holds the same rank among its brother hills, that Mr. WEBSTER is acknowledged to hold among men. The house was the centre of a tract of 160 acres of land, which still belongs to the Webster family. Though the birthplace itself has disappeared, the waters of the well are still as pure and sparkling, and the leaves of the elm as luxuriant, as when they quenched the thirst and delighted the eyes of the infant statesman nearly seventy years ago, and in their perennial nature are emblematic of the great name with which they are associated.

An appropriate appendage to the view of Mr. Webster's birthplace is the following extract from one of his speeches, delivered at Saratoga, in 1840:

"It did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin raised amid the snow drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early as that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it, to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for *him* who reared it, and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of a seven years' revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and to raise his children to a better condition than his own, may my name, and the name of my posterity, be blotted forever from the memory of mankind!"

Mr. WEBSTER was taught the letters of the alphabet by his mother,

and, because of his feebleness when a child, was ever treated by her with partial kindness. From her lips, also, were first received into his mind the vital truths of the Bible, and the first copy of the sacred volume which he ever owned was presented to him by his mother. She is remembered, and always spoken of, in New Hampshire, as a woman of superior intellect, of the warmest affections, and remarkably beautiful. She lived for her husband and children, never thinking of herself, and was venerated by all who knew her. And it is said that, when her son DANIEL had attained his tenth year, she prophesied that he would become eminent; and when she died that son was, indeed, a member of Congress.

The first school-house into which Mr. WEBSTER ever entered was built of logs, and not a vestige of it now remains, though the spot is marked by a still flourishing butternut tree. It was located about half a mile from his father's house, and, as he only attended during the winter, it was pleasant to the writer to stand upon this now classic ground, and imagine the boy DANIEL tramping through the snow on his way to school, carrying in one hand a little tin pail with his dinner, and in the other his spelling book. The man who had the honor of first teaching, in a public manner, this favorite of fortune, was William Hoyt.

The spot where Mr. WEBSTER spent the greater part of his childhood and youth is known as the "Elms Farm," and is only about three miles from his birthplace. It contains one thousand acres, lies directly in a bend of the Merrimac, and is one of the finest farms in New Hampshire. It has been in the possession of his brother Ezekiel and himself ever since the death of their father in 1806, and though intrinsically of great value, yet to the admirer of the great and good in human intellect, it must ever be a kind of Mecca, and possess a value not to be estimated by money. A portion of it is interval land, while the remainder comprehends a number of picturesque hills, from some of which may be seen the *White Mountains*, including the grand summit of *Mt. Washington*, and between *Kearsage* and the *Rugged Mountains*, the picturesque peak of *Ascutny*, in Vermont.

It is pre-eminently a grazing farm, and one of the meadow fields alone contains nearly one hundred acres, and as it is encircled and occasionally dotted with graceful elms, it presents a truly charming appearance; especially so during the haying season, when a score or two of men are wielding the scythe in a kind of cavalcade; or when, as in autumn, it is the pasturing ground of herds composed of the Devon, Ayrshire, and Hereford breeds of cattle. Near the centre of the above field are the almost obliterated re-

mains of a fort which links the farm with its early history, when this particular region was the frontier of the British colonies, and when the Indians, as the allies of the French, made it their chief business to destroy the pioneer inhabitants. The fort stood on a ridge of land, south of the burying ground, and the plough which passes over it at the present day frequently brings to light warlike memorials of the olden times. But a Sabbath peace now broods over the domain of the Webster family; the wilderness has indeed blossomed as the rose; the war-whoop has given place to the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and the tinkling of bells; and yet it is pleasant to know that the changes are not universal; for the same morning and evening atmospheres—the same healthful breezes—and the same loud singing birds, with the whip-poor-will, too, are here to make glad and to soothe the heart, in the evening as once in the morning of his days, of that great and good man who was born among these hills, and whose name has baptized them with a classic fame. One of the last Indian murders committed in New Hampshire, that of Mrs. Call, was on this estate. Here yet remain the cellar of her habitation, and the visible plot of her garden, where her husband raised his Indian corn one hundred years ago, and down to the period of Mr. WEBSTER's recollection parsnips in this garden had perpetuated themselves. The tradition is, that Philip Call and his son were at work in a meadow. In the house, Mrs. Call the elder, and her daughter-in-law, who at the time had an infant in her arms. Seeing the Indians coming, the young woman crept in behind the chimney, hushed her child, and was not discovered by them. Mrs. Call was killed, and the Indians departed. Mr. WEBSTER's father bought the farm of Philip Call, and John Call, the preserved child, Mr. WEBSTER knew in early life.

The dwellings on Elms Farm consist of the house with which are associated all his earlier and more precious recollections, also the one occupied by himself during his annual sojourn in the Granite State, and the one occupied by the tenant of the farm; while the barns and other out-houses number about a dozen, all painted white, and kept in the nicest possible order. A railroad connecting the Upper Connecticut river with Boston, crosses the farm in rather a picturesque manner, so that its proprietor may dine among the mountains and partake of his supper some three hours later in the capital of New England. It was in his house on this farm, with the tombs of his family before him at the end of a beautiful field, that the famous letter to *Hulsemann* was written.

Mr. WEBSTER's reputation as a practical agriculturist is co-extensive with his native State, and indeed with New England; and that it is justly so, the following figures, obtained from the tenant of Elms Farm, alone will prove. The yield of the farm during the present year (1851) has been estimated thus: Of English hay, one hundred and forty tons; of po-

tatoes, (consisting of five varieties,) two thousand bushels; of oats, one thousand bushels; of corn, seven hundred bushels; of sheep, four hundred and fifty, and of cattle one hundred head. One yoke of oxen, when completely dressed, weighed twenty-nine hundred pounds, and was sold in the Boston market at seven dollars per hundred.

Near his birthplace and in the bed of a little brook are the remains of an old mill which once stood in a dark glen, and was then surrounded by a majestic forest which covered the neighboring hills. The mill was a source of income to EBENEZER WEBSTER, and he kept it in operation till near the end of his life. To that mill, Daniel, though a small boy, went daily, when not in school, to assist his father in sawing boards. He was apt in learning any thing useful, and soon became so expert in doing every thing required, that his services, as an assistant, were valuable. Hence the reason for his being employed there when not at school or absolutely required elsewhere. But his time was not mispent or misapplied. After setting the saw and "hoisting the gate," and while the saw was passing through the log from end to end, which usually occupied from ten to fifteen minutes for each board, *Daniel* was usually seen reading attentively the books in the way of history and biography which he was permitted to take from the house.

There, in that old saw mill, surrounded by forests, in the midst of the great noise which such a mill makes, and this, too, without materially neglecting his task, he made himself familiar with the most remarkable events recorded by the pen of history, and with the lives and characters of the most celebrated persons who had lived in the olden time. He has never forgotten what he read there. So tenacious is his memory that it is said by those who know he can recite long passages from, and state with accuracy the contents of, pages in the old books which he read there and has scarcely looked at since.

The solitude of the scene, the absence of every thing to divert his attention, the simplicity of his occupation, the taciturn and thoughtful manner of his father, all favored the process of transplanting every idea found in those books to his own fresh, fruitful, and vigorous mind. The other scenes of Mr. WEBSTER's boyhood are hardly any of them as interesting as the place of this old mill. The academy of science, his alma mater, is not invested with more interest.

The first time that Mr. WEBSTER's eyes fell upon the Constitution of the United States, of which he is now universally acknowledged to be the *Chief Expounder and Defender*, it was printed upon a cotton pocket hand-

kerchief, according to a fashion of the time, which he chanced to stumble upon in a country store, and for which he paid, out of his own pocket, all the money he had—twenty-five cents; and the evening of the day, on which he thus obtained a copy, was wholly devoted to its close and attentive perusal, while seated before a blazing fire, and by the side of his father and mother. What dreamer on that night, in the wildest flights of his imagination, could have seen the result of that incident, or marked out the future career of that New Hampshire boy?

When Mr. WEBSTER was about seven years old his father kept a house of public entertainment, where the teamsters, who travelled on the road, were in the habit of obtaining a dinner and feeding their horses; and it is said that the incipient orator and statesman frequently entertained his father's guests by reading aloud out of the Psalms of David, to the infinite delight of his rustic listeners. Indeed, it was customary for the teamsters to remark, as they pulled up their horses before the Webster house, "Come, let's go in and hear a psalm from *Dan Webster*." Even at that time his voice was deep, rich, and musical.

His father was very strict in all religious observances, and required, among other things, that his son should go every Sunday to church, though the distance was about four miles. DANIEL complained of the hardship, for he must needs walk all the way. His father said to him:

"I see Deacon True's boys there every Sunday regularly, and have never heard of their complaining."

"Ah! yes," said DANIEL, "*Deacon True's* boys live half the way there, and of course have only half as far to walk."

"Well," said his father, "you may get up in the morning, dress yourself, and run up to Deacon True's, and go with them; then you will have no further to walk than they do."

The logic of his father was conclusive, for he never considered it a hardship to be permitted to run up to Deacon True's to play with the boys, and that the hardship, if any, lay beyond the deacon's residence. On every future summer Sabbath, therefore, when the weather would permit him, DANIEL was found at church, notwithstanding the distance.

DANIEL and Ezekiel Webster, when boys, were really devoted to the pursuits of agriculture, but the following story is current in the vicinity of their birth-place: Their father once gave them directions to perform a specific labor during his temporary absence from home, but on his return at night he found the labor unperformed, and, with a frown upon his

face, questioned the boys in regard to their idleness. "What *have* you been doing, Ezekiel?" said the father. "Nothing, sir," was the reply. "Well, Daniel, what have *you* been doing?" "*Helping Zeke, sir.*"

On one occasion DANIEL was put to mowing. He made bad work of it. His scythe was sometimes in the ground, and sometimes over the tops of all the grass. He complained to his father that his scythe was not hung right. Various attempts were made to hang it better, but with no success. His father told him at length he might hang it to suit himself; and he therefore hung it upon a tree, and said, "there, that is just right." His father laughed, and told him to let it hang there.

MR. WEBSTER'S advantages of early education were exceedingly slender, for he worked on the farm in summer and went to school only in the winter. The principal district school that he attended was three miles from his father's residence, and his pathway thither was often through deep snows. When fourteen years old he spent a few months at Phillips' academy, Exeter, enjoying the tuition and kindly counsels of Dr. Benjamin Abbot. He mastered the principles and philosophy of the English grammar in less than four months, when he immediately commenced the study of the Latin language, and his first lessons therein were recited to the late *Joseph Stevens Buckminster*, who was at that time a tutor in the academy. Here he was first called upon to "speak in public on the stage," and the effort was a failure; for the moment he began he became embarrassed, and burst into tears. His antipathy to public declamation was insurmountable; and in bearing testimony to this fact, he once uttered the following words: "I believe I made tolerable progress in most branches which I attended to while in this school, but there was one thing I could not do—I could not make a declamation; I could not speak before the school. The kind and excellent Buckminster sought especially to persuade me to perform the exercise of declamation, like other boys, but I could not do it. Many a piece did I commit to memory, and recite and rehearse in my own room, over and over again; yet, when the day came when the school collected to hear the declamations, when my name was called, and I saw all eyes turned to my seat, I could not raise myself from it. Sometimes the instructors frowned; sometimes they smiled. Mr. Buckminster always pressed and entreated, most winningly, that I would venture, venture only once. But I never could command sufficient resolution."

MR. WEBSTER once made the remark, that he could not remember the

time when he was unable to read a chapter in the bible; and when a mere boy, the motto which prompted all his conduct, was: "*Since I know nothing and have nothing, I must learn and earn.*"

A few days after Mr. WEBSTER had entered Exeter academy, he returned to his boarding house one evening in a very desponding mood, and told his friends there that the city boys in the academy were constantly laughing at him because he was at the foot of his class, and had come from the back woods. His friends endeavored to cheer him, by explaining the regulations of the school, and telling him that the boys would soon get tired of their unhandsome conduct, and that he ought to show himself above their foolishness. Mr. Nicholas Emerey, who was then an assistant tutor in the academy, was also made acquainted with young WEBSTER's troubles, and as he had the management of the second or lower class, he treated his desponding pupil with marked kindness, and particularly urged him to think of nothing but his books, and that all would yet come out bright. This advice was heeded, and at the end of the first quarter Mr. Emerey mustered his class in a line, and formally took the arm of young Webster, and marched him from the foot to the extreme head of the class, exclaiming, in the mean while, that this was his proper position. Such an event had for many days been anticipated, but when actually accomplished the remainder of the class were surprised and chagrined.

This triumph greatly encouraged the boy Daniel, and he renewed his efforts with his books. He did not doubt but that there were many boys in the class as smart as himself, if not smarter; and he looked with some anxiety to the summing up of the second quarter. The day arrived, the class was mustered, and Mr. Emerey stood before it, when the breathless silence was broken by these words:—"DANIEL WEBSTER gather up your books and take down your cap."

The boy obeyed, and thinking that he was about to be expelled from school, was sorely troubled about the cause of the calamity. The teacher saw this, but soon dispelled the illusion, for he continued:—"Now, sir, you will please report yourself to the teacher of the *first class!* and you, young gentlemen, will take an affectionate leave of your classmate, *for you will never see him again.*" That teacher is still living, is a man of distinction, and has ever been a warm friend of his fortunate Pupil.

When Mr. WEBSTER was a pupil of Dr. Woods, his father wrote him a letter, requesting that he would come to Elm's Farm to assist him in haying for a few days. He packed up his bundle of clothes and obeyed orders. On the morning after his arrival home, the boy went to work in the field,

while the father visited a neighboring town on business. About eleven o'clock the boy came to his mother and told her he was very tired, that his hands were blistered, and that he could not work any longer. The kind mother excused her son, as a matter of course, and all was well. About an hour after dinner, however, young Daniel had tackled up the family horse, placed two of his sisters in a wagon, and taken his departure for a famous whortleberry hill, where he spent the rest of the day scampering over the rocks like a young deer. His father returned at night, and having questioned Daniel and his mother about the amount of work he had performed, and heard the particulars, he laughed and sent him to bed. The next morning, after breakfast, the father handed his hopeful son his bundle of clothes, and with a smiling countenance, significantly pointed towards Boscawen, and the boy disappeared. As he left the house a neighbor saw him, and laughed.

"Where are you going, Dan?" said he.

"Back to school," replied Daniel.

"I thought it would be so," added the neighbor, and uttered another quiet laugh; and back to the academic shades returned the incipient statesman.

The neighbor alluded to above was Thomas W. Thompson, who subsequently became a representative in Congress, and who, from the beginning, conceived a high idea of Mr. WEBSTER's future eminence.

The father of Mr. WEBSTER used to speak of his boys, Daniel and Ezekiel, with great kindness, but dwelt principally upon the qualifications of Ezekiel; and when questioned by a friend as to his reasons for so doing, he replied: "Ezekiel is a bashful boy, who needs a word to be said of him; but Daniel, I warrant you, will take care of himself."

When Daniel and Ezekiel Webster were boys together, they had frequent literary disputes, and on one occasion, after they had retired to bed, they entered into a squabble about a certain passage in the "Columbian Orator," (a book of which they were both fond,) and having risen to examine some of the authorities in their possession, they set their bed clothes on fire and nearly burned up their father's dwelling. On being questioned the next morning in regard to the cause of the accident, Daniel remarked, "*that they were in pursuit of light, but got more than they wanted.*"

As Mr. WEBSTER has acquired some celebrity as an angler, it may gratify his piscatorial friends to learn when the seeds of this art were planted in his affections. In the spring of his fifth year, when a barefooted boy, he

happened to be riding along a road near his birth-place, on the same horse with his father, when the latter suddenly exclaimed: "Dan, how would you like to catch a trout?" Of course he replied, that he would like nothing better; whereupon they dismounted and the father cut a hazel rod, to which he attached a string and hook out of his pocket, baited it with a worm from under a stone, and told his son to creep upon a rock and carefully throw in on the further side of a deep pool. The boy did as he was bidden, hooked a fish, lost his balance, and tumbled into the water over his head, and was drawn ashore by his father, with a pound trout trailing behind. It has happened to the writer to see the pool in which this trout was captured.

And it may be mentioned as rather a singular fact, that the only law which he drew up and caused to be passed, when for a short time in the legislature of Massachusetts, was a law for the protection of the common trout and other game fish.

In his fifteenth year he was privileged to spend some months with one of the more prominent clergymen of the day, the Rev. Samuel Woods, who lived at Boscawen, and prepared boys for college at one dollar a week, for tuition and board. During his stay with Dr. Woods, he was apparently very neglectful of his academic duties, but never failed to perform all his intellectual tasks with great credit. On one occasion the reverend tutor thought proper to give his scholar Daniel a scolding for spending too much of his time upon the hills and along the streams, hunting and fishing, but still complimented him for his smartness. The task assigned to him for his next recitation was one hundred lines of Virgil; and as he knew that his master had an engagement on the following morning, an idea occurred to him, and he spent the entire night poring over his books. The recitation hour finally arrived, and the scholar acquitted himself of his hundred lines and received the tutor's approbation. "But I have a few more lines that I can recite," said the boy Daniel. "Well, let us have them," replied the doctor; and forthwith the boy reeled off another hundred lines. "Very remarkable," said the doctor, "you are indeed a smart boy." "But I have another," said the scholar, and five hundred of them, if you please." The doctor was of course astonished, but as he bethought him of his engagement, he begged to be excused, and added—"You may have the whole day, Dan, for pigeon shooting."

As has already been intimated he was only a few months in preparing himself for college, and during that brief period he commenced and mas-

tered the study of Greek, so that his tutor was wont to remark that other boys required an entire year to accomplish the same end. Of all his father's children DANIEL WEBSTER was, as a boy, the sickliest and most slender; and one of his half-brothers, who was somewhat of a wag, frequently took pleasure in remarking, that "Dan was sent to school because he was not fit for anything else, and that he might know as much as the other boys." Even from his earliest boyhood he was an industrious reader of standard authors, and previous to his entering college his favorite books were Addison's Spectator, Butler's Hudibras, Pope's translation of Homer, and the Essays on Man, the last of which he committed to memory; and though he has never looked it through since his fifteenth year, he is at the present time able to recite most of it from beginning to end. He was particularly fond too of the Bible, of Shakspeare, and of devotional poetry, and simply as a pleasure he committed to memory many of the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts. An English translation of Don Quixote was another of his favorite books, the power of which over his imagination he has described as having been very great. In addition to the Latin classics, he studied with interest both Cicero and Virgil, but he was particularly partial to Cicero. As he advanced in years he added Sallust, Cæsar, Horace, and Demosthenes, to the list of classic authors which he made it his business, as it was his pleasure, to master; hence it is not surprising that the productions of his own mind should be distinguished for their refined and classic elegance.

Mr. WEBSTER went through college in a manner that was highly creditable to himself and gratifying to his friends. He graduated in 1801, and though it was universally believed that he ought to have received, and would receive, the Valedictory, that honor was not conferred upon him, but upon one whose name has since passed into forgetfulness. The ill-judging faculty of the college, however, bestowed upon him a diploma, but instead of pleasing, this common-place compliment only disgusted him, and at the conclusion of the commencement exercises, the disappointed youth asked a number of his classmates to accompany him to the green behind the college, where, in their presence, he deliberately *tore up* his honorary document, and threw it to the winds, exclaiming: "My industry may make me a great man, but this miserable parchment cannot;" and immediately mounting his horse, departed for home.

Those who would like to read the first oration delivered by Mr. WEBSTER, only about fifty years ago, to the people of Hanover, are referred to the choice collections of American Antiquarians; and it is to be regretted

that it will not probably appear in the forthcoming edition of his works. Suffice it to say, that it proves his bosom to have been, even at that early day, full of patriotism, and that in his youth the seeds of his noblest sentiments had taken deep root. The title page was as follows: "An oration pronounced at Hanover, N. H., the 4th of July, 1800, being the twenty-fourth Anniversary of American Independence. By *Daniel Webster*. Member of the Junior Class, Dartmouth College.

"Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.

ADDISON.

Published by request, and printed at Hanover, by Moses Davis."

On his return home from college the one great thought which occupied his mind was, that his brother Ezekiel should also receive a liberal education. But his father was poor, and how could this result be attained? "By keeping school," said he to himself, "and this shall be the first business of my life." No sooner had this idea occurred to him, than he sought an opportunity to broach it to his much-loved brother. The boys slept together, and he did this on their next retiring to bed. Ezekiel was surprised, but delighted, for he had long felt a yearning desire to acquire a college education. The trying circumstances of the family were of course all discussed, and as they thought of the strong affection which existed between them, and of the "clouds and shadows" which enveloped the future, they talked and talked, and wept many and bitter tears, so that when morning came it found the brothers still wakeful, troubled, and unhappy, but yet determined and hopeful. On that very day, the youth DANIEL left his home to become a country schoolmaster, while Ezekiel hastened to place himself under the preparatory tuition of the Rev. Samuel Woods, as his brother had done before him.

The place where Mr. WEBSTER spent the most of his time as a schoolmaster was Fryeburg, in the State of Maine. He had been invited thither by a friend of his father, who was acquainted with the circumstances of the family. His school was quite large, and his salary \$350, to which he added a considerable sum by devoting his evenings to copying deeds in the office of the county recorder, at twenty-five cents per deed. He also found time during this period to go through with his first reading of Blackstone's Commentaries, and other substantial works, which have been so good a foundation to his after fame.

The writer once questioned Mr. WEBSTER as to his personal appearance when officiating as a pedagogue, and his reply was: "Long, slender, pale, and all eyes; indeed, I went by the name of *all eyes* the country round."

During the last summer, when returning from a visit to the White mountains, accompanied by his son Fletcher, he went out of his way to spend a day in the town of Fryeburg. He revisited, after the lapse of half a century, the office of the recorder of deeds, and there found and exhibited to his son, two large bound volumes of his own handwriting, the sight of which was of course suggestive of manifold emotions. The son testifies that the penmanship is neat and elegant; and the father, that the *ache* is not yet out of those fingers which so much writing caused them.

It is said by those who knew Mr. WEBSTER at Fryeburg, that his only recreation while a school teacher was derived from trout fishing, and that his Wednesday and Saturday afternoons were almost invariably spent wandering alone, with rod in hand, and a copy of Shakspeare in his pocket, along the wild and picturesque brooks of that section of country.

Mr. WEBSTER's father was a soldier in the old French war, (so called) and, as already mentioned, also acquitted himself with honor as a captain under General John Stark, at the battle of Bennington. On the battlefield, as well as in the walks of civil life, they were fast friends; and the elder Webster used to say, that General Stark always thought and talked a great deal more about his exploits as a trapper of beaver, and a hunter, and fighter of the Red man and Frenchman, in his earlier life, than he did of his revolutionary deeds. But Mr. DANIEL WEBSTER relates the following characteristic anecdote. He was about twenty-seven years of age, and professional business had called him to the then village, now known as the flourishing city of Manchester, where the famous General resided. The young lawyer called upon the hero for the purpose of paying his respects, and found him surrounded with friends, who with him were hard at work drinking flip. The parties were introduced, and the moment General Stark heard the name of WEBSTER, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "why, DAN WEBSTER, you're as black as your father; and he was so black that I could never tell when his face was covered with powder, for he was one of those chaps always in the thickest of the fight."

It was while hunting in the immediate vicinity of Elms Farm that General Stark had been captured by the Indians and taken to Canada, where he was sold for a specific sum of money; and it is a common saying in this region, that whenever he heard his neighbors talking about

how much any of them were worth, he invariably mentioned the fact, that his own value had been positively ascertained, for the Indians had once sold him to the French for £40, and that a man was *worth about* what he would fetch.

The name of Mr. WEBSTER'S tenant on Elms Farm is John Taylor. He was transported thither by Mr. Webster about twenty years ago from the region of Marshfield, and in several particulars he is a great man. His height is *nearly* six feet and five inches; he has a heart bigger than his body, and is really a superb specimen of American yeomanry. But his reigning peculiarity is his attachment to his landlord. When the latter was temporarily ill during the last summer, John Taylor watched by his bedside night after night without closing his eyes, performing all the delicate duties of a nurse with the gentleness of a woman. "If I saw a bullet coming to his heart," said he, to the writer, on one occasion, "I would jump in the way of it and receive it myself;" and when told that this was very strong language, he added, "I know it is, but then I should be certain that my family would be provided for and made comfortable." From no man living could a greater number of personal anecdotes be obtained, calculated to illustrate the more endearing attributes of Mr. WEBSTER'S heart; how he was with him, for example, when he gave an old man—a friend of his father's—money enough to buy a small farm; how he accompanied him to the summit of a hill, one summer evening, and heard him talk in the most affecting manner, as he sat musing upon the spot where he was born, while his eyes were constantly filling with tears; and how, on many occasions, he had descanted to him, in the most glowing language, on the pleasures of farming, contrasting them with the trials and perplexities of a public life. John Taylor is also a first rate farmer, and has performed as great an amount of hard labor as any other man in the Union; and is deserving, in every particular, of the ardent friendship and unlimited confidence of his landlord.

On one occasion, some years ago, when Mr. WEBSTER was visited at Elms Farm by some two or three hundred of his New Hampshire friends, he addressed them, as was his wont, in a friendly and familiar way, giving an account, as it were, of his stewardship in the capacity of a statesman. He stood upon the porch of his own residence, and in full view of the family burying ground, and after re-affirming the opinions he had long entertained upon the prominent questions of the day, he concluded his remarks by saying: "And before changing these opinions, fellow citizens, you will be called upon to convey my body to yonder grave-

yard." He uttered the sentiment while laboring under the deepest emotion, and its effect upon his audience was to melt many of them to tears.

While upon his last visit to Elms Farm, Mr. WEBSTER's tenant had about twenty men in his employ making hay. On one occasion, when they were engaged in one field, the "Lord of the Manor" went forth to witness their operations, and having stood for some time in silence, the smell of the hay gave new life to the blood of his youth, and taking off his coat, and throwing it upon the ground, he demanded a fork and went to work, declaring that he could "pitch more hay in an hour than any man in the crowd." And he verily fulfilled his promise. He helped load the largest wagon no less than three times, and also performed the duties of wagon boy in as scientific a manner, too, as if this had been the chief business of his life, instead of helping to manage the wheels of Government, officiating as a diplomatist, or delighting a listening Senate with his eloquence.

The following story was related by Mr. WEBSTER during a conversation the writer had with him about the early history of New Hampshire:

Among the many prisoners who were taken by the *Conewago* Indians during the old French war of 1756, in the immediate vicinity of Elms Farm, and sold to the French in Canada, was a man named Peter Bowen. When peace was declared he obtained his liberty and returned to his family who resided in Boscawen. In the year 1763 two Indians of the *Conewago* tribe, Sebat and his Son, came from the borders of Canada upon a visit to the valley of the Merrimac, and happening to fall into the company of Bowen spent the night with him for old acquaintance sake, and in the enthusiasm, brought on by forest recollections, the party went through the performances of a drunken frolic. When the time came for the Indians to return Bowen accompanied them a few miles on their way, when, as they were in the act of crossing a small stream running through Elms Farm, and now known as Indian brook, the white man suddenly fell upon his red friends, shooting one and killing the other with the butt of his gun, and secreted their bodies in the top of a fallen tree.

Weeks passed on, and it was rumored far and near that Sebat and his Son had been murdered, and that Bowen was the murderer. The inhabitants of the Merrimac valley were well acquainted with the characteristic code of the Indians, demanding blood for blood, and in self defence thought it their duty to have Bowen arrested and punished. He was arrested, tried, found guilty, and condemned to be hung, and this intelligence was transmitted to the *Conewago* Indians.

During the imprisonment of Bowen, however, in the jail at Exeter, (to which he had to be removed,) a portion of the inhabitants became impressed with the idea that no white man ought to be hung for killing an Indian, whereupon a party of them, disguised as Mohawk Indians, broke the Exeter jail open and gave Bowen his freedom, and he lived in peace on his farm during the remainder of his days.

When Bowen died he left his farm to an only son, who lived quietly upon it until he was seventy years of age, and the head of a large family. The story of his father's wickedness in murdering the Indians, though it occurred before his birth, had tinged with gloom even his happier days, and now the thought came to possess his mind that he must atone for the deed committed by his father. His friends remonstrated, but nothing could deter him from his purpose; he parted with his family; many tears were shed and lamentations uttered, but he entered upon his line of march for Canada, feeble and old, and gave himself up as a prisoner to the Cone-wago nation. The Indians were astonished at this instance of heroism, and instead of taking blood for blood they adopted him as a chief among their chiefs, and subsequently permitted him to return to the Merrimac valley, where he died in the midst of his children.

As the devoted affection which existed between DANIEL WEBSTER and his brother Ezekiel was one of the peculiarities of their lives, and as they also resembled each other in many particulars, both physical and intellectual, it cannot but be proper to insert in this place a brief sketch of the latter gentleman.

Ezekiel Webster was two or three years older than his brother Daniel, but did not graduate until three years after him, in 1804. In college he was the first in his class; his intellect was of a very high order; its capacity was general, for he was able to comprehend the abstruse and difficult, and at the same time to enjoy the tasteful and the elegant. He was distinguished for classical literature; his knowledge of Greek particularly was beyond that of his contemporaries in college; his knowledge of English literature was deep and extensive, for he had not skimmed over books as a matter of amusement, but he looked into them as a man of mind, who intends to draw lessons from all he reads. Few men among our scholars knew so much of the English poets as he did; and he valued them as he should have done, as philosophers and painters of human nature, from whom much knowledge may be obtained to illustrate and adorn what dulle minds have put into maxims and rules.

He made himself master of the law as a science, and became well acquainted with its practice in his native State. He went up to first principles

with the ease and directness of a great mind, and separated at once that which was casual and local, from that which is permanent and founded on the basis of moral justice and the nature of man. There seemed no effort in any thing he did; all was natural and easy, as if intuitive. There was nothing about him of that little bustling smartness so often seen in ordinary persons striving to perform something to attract the attention of the little world around them.

His general information was not only extensive, but laid up in excellent order, ready for use. He was steadily engaged in the duties of his profession, but never seemed hurried or confused in his business; he took all calmly and quietly; he did nothing for parade or show, or mere effect, nor did he speak to the audience while addressing the court and jury. His life was passed in habits of industry and perseverance, and his accumulations of wealth and knowledge were regular and rapid. From the commencement of his life as a reasoning being, responsible for his own actions, to the close of it, he preserved the most perfect consistency of character; no paroxysms of passion, no eccentricities of genius, were ever found in him. His equanimity was only equalled by his firmness of purpose. In this he was most conspicuous; he thought leisurely and cautiously, and having made up his mind, he was steadfast and immovable. Having no hasty or premature thoughts, he seldom had occasion to change his opinions, and was therefore free from those mortifying repentances so common to superior minds of warmer temperament. By honesty of purpose and soundness of judgment he kept a just balance in weighing all matters before him. All his firmness and equanimity, and other virtues, seemed constitutional, and not made up by those exertions so necessary to most frail beings who intend to support a character for steady habits. He was blessed with a frame that felt few or no infirmities. He suffered no moral or mental weakness in his whole path of duty, for his constitution, until within a short time of his death, exhibited a sound mind in a sound body, and neither appeared essentially injured or decayed to the hour of his exit from the world.

He never sought public honors, nor literary or political distinctions, and therefore had none of those throes and agonies so common to vaulting ambition; not that he declined all public trusts, when he was conscious that he could do any good to his fellow men. He was several years a member of one or other branch of the legislature of New Hampshire, and served as a trustee of Dartmouth college. He was at different times put up for a member of Congress; but it was at periods when his friends thought that his name would do some good to his political party, as the members of Congress in New Hampshire are chosen by a general ticket; but, when they were decidedly in power, he would seldom or

never consent to be a candidate. This was much to be regretted; for he was admirably calculated for public life by his extensive knowledge and incorruptible integrity. He would have been a first rate speaker on the floor of Congress. His eloquence was impressive and commanding. There was in his delivery a slight defect in the labial sounds, in the familiar use of his voice, which was rather pleasant to the listener than otherwise, for it was a proof of a natural manner; but, warmed by his subject, a more rich, full, and sonorous voice, was seldom heard in any public body; not that his tones were delicate or mellifluous, but full of majesty and command; free from arrogance, timidity, or hesitation. His gestures were graceful, but not in the slightest degree studied; his language was rich, gentlemanly, select, but not painfully chosen; he not only had words for all occasions, but the very words he should have used.

As a writer he excelled in judgment and taste; there was a classical elegance in his familiar writings; and his higher compositions were marked with that lucid order and clearness of thought, and purity of expression, which distinguished the Augustan age. His sentences were not grappled together by hooks of steel, but connected by golden hinges, that made a harmonious whole. His library was rich in works of merit, ancient and modern. The history of literature and science was as familiar to him as that of his native State, and he had the means of turning to it with much greater facility. He was an instance in point, that a man may be a good lawyer, and yet devote some of his time to classical pursuits.

Ezekiel Webster was one of those great men, rare instances in the world, who had thrown away ambition, and who professed to be learned and happy in his course of life, rather than to court the gale and spread his sails to be wafted along on popular opinion. He sought not popularity, but he had it; *that popularity which follows, not that which is run after.* He watched the signs of the times, and was as good a diviner in politics as any one; but, whatever the presages were, he looked at coming events unmoved, leaving their results to heaven.

For several of the last years of his life, he was curtailing his business in order to devote some portion of the prime of his manhood to literary and scientific pursuits, so congenial to his heart; but in this he was disappointed, for, yet while in the fulness of his strength, he was called to leave the world, for whose benefit he was formed. His death was sudden and remarkable; he fell and expired while in the midst of an argument at the bar, without a sigh or a struggle. No event could have been more unexpected by the public, for he was one of those models for a picture of health and strength that Salvator Rosa would have drawn in his moun-

tain scenery, if he had wished to exhibit a commander able to bear the fatigues and duties of council and of war. He was lamented by his professional brethren, and sincerely mourned by the community at large.*

As Dartmouth college gave Mr. WEBSTER the greater part of his classical education, it ought to be mentioned how it was that he was subsequently enabled to make an adequate return to that institution. In 1816 the legislature of New Hampshire, believing that the right of altering or amending the charter of this college, which had been granted by the King previous to the Revolution, was vested in them by the constitution of the State, proceeded to enlarge and improve it. This act was not accepted nor assented to by the trustees of Dartmouth college, and they refused to submit to it any further than they were compelled to do so by the necessities of the case. The new institution called, by the act of the legislature, "The Dartmouth University," went into operation, as far as existing circumstances would permit. There were two presidents, two sets of professors in the same village, and, of course, no good fellowship between them. The students generally took side with the college party, a few only going over to the university. It was a very uncomfortable state of things. The faculty of both institutions were highly respectable, and capable of building up any literary and scientific seminary, had they been under different auspices. The lawyers were consulted, and the most distinguished of them, Smith, Mason, and Webster, were of the opinion that the act of the legislature of New Hampshire was unconstitutional, and of course not valid. It was conceded that there were many difficulties in the case; but it was indispensable that the question should be decided, that one of the institutions might survive the quarrel. The records, charter, and the evidence of the college property, were in the hands of the new treasurer, and an action of trover was brought by the trustees of Dartmouth college to recover them. The facts were agreed on. The question, "whether the acts of the legislature of New Hampshire, of the 27th of June and of the 16th and 18th of December, 1816, are valid and binding on the rights of the plaintiffs, without their acceptance or assent?"

It was a great constitutional question. The people of Massachusetts took as deep an interest in it as those of New Hampshire. The cause was ably argued before the supreme court of New Hampshire, and the opinion of the court was given by Chief Justice Richardson, in favor of the validity and constitutionality of the acts of the legislature, and judg-

*Knapp's Life of Webster.

ment was accordingly entered up for the defendant. Thereupon, a writ of error was sued out by the plaintiffs in the original suit, and the cause removed to the Supreme Court of the United States. In March, 1818, the cause was argued before all the judges, by Mr. WEBSTER and Mr. Hopkinson for the plaintiffs, and by Mr. Holmes and Mr. Wirt for the defendant in error. The anxiety of the parties, the great constitutional principle involved, the deep interest felt by every lawyer in the country in the decision of the question, gave more notoriety to the cause than to any ever brought before that august tribunal. Some were apprehensive that the court would evade the question in some way or other. Mr. WEBSTER had no such fears. He knew the judges well enough to believe, that while they were not anxious to meet constitutional questions, whenever they were fully brought before them, the subject would be most solemnly considered and as fearlessly decided. The question was argued on both sides with great ability. The counsel were men of research, and their reputations were in the case; for it was well known, whatever way it was decided, it would form a leading case. Mr. WEBSTER came to his work fully possessed of all the views that could be taken of the subject, and he sustained and increased by this argument the reputation he had acquired as a profound constitutional lawyer. Chiefly through his acknowledged instrumentality, the judgment of the State court was reversed, the acts of the legislature declared null and void, as being unconstitutional. The university disappeared; the college rose with new vigor, and the people of New Hampshire acquiesced in the decision, and a great portion of the thinking people of the country considered it as a new proof of the wisdom and strength of the Constitution of the United States.*

Ever since the first free school was established amidst the woods that covered the peninsula of Boston, in 1636, the schoolmaster has been found on the border line, between savage and civilized life; often, indeed, with an axe to open his own path, but always looked up to with respect, and always carrying with him a valuable and preponderating influence. It is to this characteristic trait of New England policy that the country owes the first development of Mr. WEBSTER's powers and the original determination of his whole course in life; for, unless the school had sought him in the forest, his father's means would not have been sufficient to send him into the settlements to seek the school. The first upward step, therefore, would have been wanting, and it is not at all probable that any

* Knapp's Life of Webster.

subsequent exertions on his part would have enabled him to retrieve it. The value of such a benefit cannot, indeed, be measured, but it seems to have been his good fortune to be able, at least in part, to repay it; for no man has explained with simplicity and force, as he has explained them, the very principles and foundations on which the free schools of New England and the Union rest; or shown, with such a feeling of their importance and value, how truly the free institutions of our country must be built on the education of all.*

As Mr. Webster has been a prominent politician for about forty years, it may gratify curiosity to know when and how he entered upon this important career. It was before he had attained his thirtieth year, when the times were stormy, and party spirit ran high in view of a war with Great Britain. He entered the field like one who had made up his mind to be decided, firm, and straight-forward in all his actions. No politician was ever more direct and bold, and he had nothing of the demagogue about him. Fully persuaded of the true course, he followed it with so much firmness and principle, that sometimes his serenity was taken by the furious and headstrong as apathy; but when a fair and legitimate opportunity offered, he came out with such strength and manliness, that the doubting were satisfied and the complaining silenced. In the worst of times and the darkest hour he had faith in the redeeming qualities of the people. They might be wrong, but he saw into their true character sufficiently to believe that they would never remain permanently in error. In some of his conversations upon the subject, he compared the people in the management of the national affairs to that of the sagacious and indefatigable raftsmen on his native Merrimac, who had falls and shoals to contend with in their course to the ocean—guiding fearlessly and skilfully over the former—between rocks and through breakers; and when reaching the sand banks jumping off into the water with lever, axe, and oar; and then with pushing, cutting, and directing, made all rub and go to the astonishment of those looking on.

The first halo of political glory that hung around his brow was at a convention of the great spirits in the county of Rockingham, where he then resided, and such representatives from other counties as were sent to this convention to take into consideration the state of the nation, and to mark out such a course for themselves as should be deemed advisable by the collected wisdom of those assembled. On this occasion an address with a string of resolutions were proposed for adoption, of which he was the

* American Quarterly Review.

author. They exhibited uncommon powers of intellect and a profound knowledge of our national interests. He made a most powerful speech in support of these resolutions, portions of which were printed at the time, and much admired throughout the Union. From this time he belonged to the United States and not to New Hampshire exclusively. Massachusetts also took as great an interest in his career as his native State. After the above *debut* crowds gathered around him on every occasion that he appeared, and his speeches were invariably received with the most sincere and heartfelt applause.*

It was in the year 1805, and of course in the twenty-third year of his age, that Mr. Webster was tendered the vacant clerkship of the Court of Common Pleas for the county of Hillsborough, New Hampshire. His father was one of the judges of said court, and the appointment had been bestowed upon his son by his colleagues as a token of personal regard. The office was worth some fifteen hundred dollars, which in those days, and that section of country, was equal to the salary of Secretary of State at the present time. Delighted with this realization of his most sanguine hopes, the father hastened to communicate the joyful intelligence to his son.

That son was then a student in the office of Mr. Gore, in Boston. He received the news with sensations of gladness that he had never before experienced. With a loud throbbing heart he announced the tidings to his legal counsellor and friend, and to his utter astonishment that far-seeing and sagacious man expressed, in the most pointed manner, his utter disapprobation of the proposed change in his pursuits. "But my father is poor, and I wish to make him comfortable in his old age," replied the student.

"That may all be," continued Mr. Gore, "but you should think of the future more than of the present. Become once a clerk and you will always be a clerk, with no prospect of attaining a higher position. Go on and finish your legal studies; you are indeed poor, but there are greater evils than poverty; live on no man's favor; what bread you do eat, let it be the bread of independence; pursue your profession; make yourself useful to the world and formidable to your enemies, and you will have nothing to fear."

The student listened attentively to these sound arguments, and had the good sense to appreciate them. His determination was immediately made; and now came the dreaded business of advising his father as to his intended

course. He felt that it would be a difficult task to satisfy him of its propriety, and he therefore determined to go home without delay, and give him in full all the reasons of his conduct.

In three days, in spite of the inclemency of the weather, for it was winter, he had reached the dwelling on Elms Farm. According to his own account, he arrived there in the evening, and found his father sitting before the fire. He received him with manifest joy. He looked feeble than he had ever appeared, but his countenance lighted up on seeing his clerk stand before him in good health and spirits. He lost no time in alluding to the great appointment; said how spontaneously it had been made, how kindly the chief justice proposed it, and with what unanimity all assented. During this speech, it can be well imagined how embarrassed Mr. WEBSTER felt, compelled, as he thought from a conviction of duty, to disappoint his father's sanguine expectations. Nevertheless, he commanded his countenance and voice, so as to reply in a sufficiently assured manner. He spoke gaily about the office; expressed his great obligation to their honors, and his intention to write them a most respectful letter; if he could have consented to record anybody's judgments, he should have been proud to have recorded their honors, &c., &c. He proceeded in this strain till his father exhibited signs of amazement, it having occurred to him, finally, that his son might all the while be serious. "Do you intend to decline this office?" he said at length. "Most certainly," replied his son. "I cannot think of doing otherwise. I mean to use my tongue in the courts, not my pen; to be an actor, not a register of other men's actions."

For a moment Judge Webster seemed angry. He rocked his chair slightly, a flash went over his eye, softened by age, but even then black as jet, but it soon disappeared, and his countenance regained its usual serenity. "Well, my son," said Judge Webster finally, "your mother always said that you would come to something or nothing, become a somebody or a nobody; it is now settled that you are to be a nobody." In a few days the student returned to Boston, and the subject was never afterwards mentioned in the family.*

Within six months after Mr. WEBSTER had declined the county court clerkship, he was, even as a student, in Mr. Gore's office, remarkably successful in accumulating money for his legal services, and being aware of the fact that his father was considerably embarrassed in his circumstances, he resolved to go home and liquidate all the pending claims. He

* March's Reminiscences of Congress.

arrived at home ostensibly for a friendly visit. It was Saturday night, and he sought an early opportunity to have a private interview with his father. "Father, I am going to pay your debts," said he. "O, my son, that can never be; you know not how numerous they are."

"But I can, and will, father; and that too before next Monday night."

On the Tuesday morning following, Judge Webster was a free man, and his son DANIEL was on his return to Boston.

At the time that Mr. WEBSTER quitted Portsmouth for Boston, he was doing the heaviest law business of any man in New Hampshire; he was retained in nearly all the important causes, and but seldom appeared as the junior counsel. His practice was chiefly in the circuit courts, and during the last six weeks of his labors, previous to his departure for Boston, his earnings amounted to only five hundred dollars. This was the result of a journey into every county in the State, and was really the primal cause of his removal to a wider sphere of action.

It was in the year 1817 that Mr. WEBSTER took up his permanent residence in Boston. During his career as a member of Congress his legal and private interests had materially suffered, and he felt the need of a broader field than Portsmouth for his future action. He had already become identified with the interests of the New England metropolis, and the more opulent merchants doing business there were ready to employ him. Boston was then the residence of some of the first lawyers of the nation; such men for example as Dexter, Prescott, Sullivan, Shaw, Gorham, and Hubbard, and there seemed to be little room for another in the upper class of the legal fraternity; but Mr. WEBSTER seemed to walk into this distinguished company like one who had a right to be there, and, though many opened wide their eyes, none dared to question his right to be there. In a very few months his name appeared as senior counsel in many important causes, and he deported himself like one who was simply enjoying his birth-right. His practice was not confined to the county of Suffolk, but extended to the neighboring counties, and others in the interior of the State. His powers as an advocate and a lawyer were at once conceded, though some found fault with his manners at the bar as a little too severe and sharp; this, however, was soon forgotten in the admiration that everywhere followed him. The people were always with him, and few had the hardihood to declare themselves his rival.

As were his manners at the bar some thirty years ago, so are they now, whenever he appears in a deliberative assembly. He begins to state his points in a low voice, and in a slow, cool, cautious, and philosophical

manner. If the case is of importance, he goes on, hammering out, link by link, his chain of argument, with ponderous blows, leisurely inflicted; and, while thus at labor, you rather see the sinews of the arm than the skill of the artist. It is in reply, however, that he comes out in the majesty of intellectual grandeur, and pours forth the opulence of his mind; it is when the arrows of the enemy have hit him, that he is all might and soul, and showers his words, weight, and fire. His style of oratory is founded on no model, but is entirely his own. He deals not with the fantastic and poetical, but with the matter-of-fact every-day world, and the multifarious affairs of his fellow-men, extricating them from difficulties, and teaching them how to become happy. He never strives to dazzle, astonish, or confuse, but goes on to convince and conquer by great but legitimate means. When he goes out to battle, he goes alone, trusting to no earthly arm but his own. He asks for no trophies but his own conquests; he looks not for the laurel of victory, but it is proffered to him by all, and binds his brow until he goes out on some new exploit.*

For a great many years past Mr. WEBSTER has had a regular law office in the city of Boston, and supplied with a valuable library of 5 or 6,000 volumes, which has, however, for the most part, been in the keeping of a law partner. In alluding to this fact on one occasion he informed the writer that it was with the utmost difficulty that he could ever bring himself to attend to any legal business when sojourning at either of his country residences. "It not unfrequently happens," said he, "that people come to me just I as am about to leave Boston for Marshfield, with the request that I shall attend to their suits. I decline the business, and they insist upon my taking it in hand. I take their papers, put them in my *green bag*, and determine that I will attend to their cases when at Marshfield. When arrived at this place my mind becomes so taken up with its manifold enjoyments that I forget all about the green bag, *unless there happens to come a rainy day*. In that event I sometimes look at the musty papers, but it is not unfrequently the case, that the bag travels from Boston to the sea shore and thence to the mountains, and back again, without ever being disturbed. The truth is, you cannot mention the *fee* which I value half as much as I do a morning walk over my farm, the sight of a dozen yoke of my oxen furrowing one of my fields, or the breath of my cows and the pure ocean air."

The first meeting of Mr. WEBSTER with Mr. Mason was in a criminal trial. A noted person, belonging to the Democratic party, had been in-

* Knapp's Life of Webster.

dicted for counterfeiting, and it was deemed particularly important that he should be acquitted. Mr. Mason stood foremost among his professional brethren, and was of course employed to defend the accused. When the trial came on, the Attorney General happened to be absent, whereupon Mr. Webster was delegated to conduct the prosecution for the State. Mr. Mason came into court and conducted himself somewhat after the manner of Goliath; but when Mr. WEBSTER, like another David, (to use the language of a cotemporary) "came down upon his distinguished opponent like a shower of hail," Mr. Mason was astonished, and began to tremble for the fate of his client. It so happened, however, that a Democratic jury acquitted their friend; but Mr. Mason subsequently expressed himself as having been struck with the high, open, and manly ground taken by Mr. WEBSTER, not resorting to technicalities but sticking to the main points of the law and the facts, and at that early period prophesied that his future public career would be particularly brilliant and useful.

In legal acquirements and logical skill Jeremiah Mason and Jeremiah Smith were not the unworthy associates and antagonists of Daniel WEBSTER; while, in the combination of gifts, which makes the commanding orator, he stood with them, as he has done everywhere else, like Mount Washington among the other mountains of New England. Mr. Smith has often said that in single qualities he had known men superior to Mr. WEBSTER; that Hamilton had more original genius; Ames greater quickness of imagination; that Marshall, Parsons, and Dexter were as remarkable for logical strength; but that, in the union of high intellectual qualities, he had known no man whom he thought his equal.*

Mr. WEBSTER practised law in Portsmouth nearly nine years, and during that time one of his best friends, and also his most prominent competitor, was the distinguished Jeremiah Mason. On one occasion a gentleman called upon the former for the purpose of securing his services in a lawsuit, but Mr. WEBSTER was compelled to decline the engagement, but recommended his client to Mr. Mason.

"What do you think of the abilities of Mr. Mason?" said the gentleman.

"I think him second to no man in the country," replied Mr. WEBSTER.

The gentleman called upon Mr. Mason, and having secured his promise of assistance, he thought he would gratify his curiosity, and therefore questioned him as to his opinion of Mr. WEBSTER. "He's the very devil, in

*Morison's life of Jeremiah Smith.

any case whatsoever," replied Mr. Mason, "and if he's against you, I beg to be excused."

Mr. WEBSTER, who has since met Pinkney, and Wirt, and Emmet at the bar, has recently been heard to say that he never feared any of them so much as Jeremiah Mason.

The birthplace and mountain farm of Mr. WEBSTER having already been described in this volume, the writer would now give an account of Marshfield, the *home*, pre-eminently, of the distinguished statesman. The place thus designated is in the town of Marshfield, county of Plymouth, and State of Massachusetts. It is more of a magnificent farm, with elegant appendages, than the mere elegant residence of a gentleman; a place indeed, which, if in England, could hardly be described without frequent use of the word baronial. It lies some thirty miles from Boston, comprehends about two thousand acres of undulating and marshy land, and slopes down to the margin of the ocean. The original owners of the land, now combined into one estate, were Nathaniel Ray Thomas, a noted loyalist, who was the hero of Trumbull's poem of McFingal, and the famous Winslow family, which has given to Massachusetts, as colony and State, a number of her earlier governors. It came into Mr. WEBSTER's possession somewhere about twenty-five years ago, and is the domain where he has chiefly gratified his taste for, and exhibited his knowledge of, the interesting science of agriculture. The great good that he has here accomplished in that particular can hardly be estimated; but for all the pains and trouble which the place has cost him, the proprietor is amply rewarded by the fact that he is now the owner of one of the very best farms in the whole country.

Like Elms Farm, Marshfield has also its tenant or superintendent, whose name is Porter Wright, and who in all particulars is amply qualified for his responsible position. From him was gathered the information that when Mr. WEBSTER came to Marshfield the farm yielded only some fifteen tons of English hay, while the product in this particular during the present year amounted to nearly four hundred tons, in addition to two hundred tons of salt hay; also of corn eight hundred bushels, potatoes one thousand bushels, oats five hundred bushels, turnips five hundred bushels, and beets four hundred bushels. In 1825 the inhabitants of Plymouth county knew nothing of kelp and sea-weed as articles that would enrich their lands; but Mr. WEBSTER discovered their value, set the example of using them, profited thereby, and they are now considered so indispensable that some of the farmers in the country will team it a distance of thirty miles. Principally at his own expense Mr. WEBSTER laid out a road to the beach on

which the kelp was thrown by the sea; and not a single ton of the article is known to have been drawn on the land before he went to Marshfield. In October of this year one hundred and fifty teams were employed after a storm in drawing this rich manure on to the estates adjoining Marshfield, exclusive of those engaged by Mr. Porter Wright. And some of Mr. WEBSTER's neighbors allege that they could well afford to give him five tons of hay a year for having taught them the use of ocean manure. In olden times, too, it was but precious seldom that the traveller's eye fell upon any but a wood-colored house in the vicinity of Marshfield Farm, while now, neatly painted dwellings may be seen in every direction, and many of their occupants acknowledge that Mr. WEBSTER has not only helped them to make money by giving them employment, but has also taught them how to make themselves comfortable. Some of them, indeed, go so far as to say, that if the town of Marshfield should make Mr. WEBSTER a present of thirty thousand dollars, they would only be rendering an adequate return for his agricultural services. He has not only taught them how to enrich their soils, but in stocking his own farm with the very best of blooded cattle, he has also, with a liberal hand, scattered them upon the farms of his neighbors.

Indeed, the raising of fine cattle is Mr. WEBSTER's agricultural hobby, and it is a rare treat to take a walk with him over his grazing fields, or through the spacious yards adjoining his overflowing barns, and to hear him descant upon the goodness and beauty of his Alderney cows, with their gazelle eyes, or the brilliant color of his Devon oxen, and contrasting their excellencies with those which distinguish the breeds of Hertfordshire and Ayrshire. A better judge of cattle than he is not to be found any where; and though his stables are abundantly supplied with horses, for these he entertains no uncommon attachment; but then, again, for sheep and swine he has a partiality. Of the latter animal he once raised a single litter of twelve, which were all entirely white, and when killed averaged in weight no less than four hundred pounds. And those who have a passion for the oddities of the quadruped world, may, by taking a short walk into a particular field, have a sight of several South American llamas, which help to give a romantic character to the farm. And when the reader comes to add to the foregoing three varieties of geese, ducks of all kinds, domesticated in this country, Guinea hens, peacocks, and Chinese poultry, to an almost unlimited extent, he may well imagine that the living animals of Marshfield compose a "cattle show" of no common order.

The mind that has had the good sense to enrich Marshfield Farm with so much of the useful and interesting, has also covered it with the results of the most refined taste. The flower garden, for example, covers nearly

an acre of ground, and contains the richest and most beautiful varieties of plants, peculiar to the country. Of forest trees, too, there is a multitudinous array, of every size and every variety; and it has been estimated, that at least one hundred thousand of them have grown to their present size from seeds planted by Mr. WEBSTER's own hands; for, as he has often said, when he originally came to Marshfield, he was too poor a man to think of patronizing such establishments as nurseries, even if they had existed to any extent. Of fruit trees there is also an extensive collection; and while one orchard contains some three hundred trees, that remind one of the Pilgrim Fathers, so weather-beaten and worn in their attire are they; another, of a thousand trees, presents the appearance of an army of youthful warriors; and then the farm is so appropriately intersected with roads and avenues, gravelly walks and shady pathways, that every thing which the visiter notices seems to be in exactly the right place, and is so completely come-at-able that the idea of being fatigued never enters the mind; and how pre-eminently is this the case, when the visiter is accompanied in his walks by the ruling spirit of that place, as well as of the country itself. But the value and pictorial beauty of Marshfield are greatly enhanced by the existence, in the immediate vicinity of the mansion, of a trio of little lakes, all of them fed by springs of the purest water. The two smaller ones are the favorite haunts of the common geese and the duck tribes; but the larger one, which studs the landscape very charmingly, is the exclusive domain of a large flock of wild geese, which Mr. WEBSTER has domesticated. He informed the writer that his first attempts to tame these beautiful creatures were all unsuccessful, until the idea occurred to him, that perhaps they might be made contented with their civilized abode, provided they could have awarded to them small sedgy islands, such as were found at their breeding places in the far north, where they might make their nests and remain undisturbed by the fox and other prowling animals. The experiment was tried; and while the geese were rendered contented with their lot, the lake itself has been greatly improved in picturesque beauty, by its wild yet artificial islands. Indeed, the rural scenery of Marshfield is all that could be desired by the painter or poet; but when they come to add thereto an immense expanse of marsh land, veined with silver streams, dotted with islands of unbroken forest, skirted with a far-reaching beach, and bounded by the blue ocean, they cannot but be deeply impressed with the magnificence of its scenery.

It now becomes necessary to mention the buildings of Marshfield Farm. They number some two or three dozen, at the least calculation, embracing the mansion and adjoining out-houses, the residence of the chief tenant, the dairyman's cottage, the fisherman's house, the landlord's agricultural

office, several large barns, the gardener's house, and a variety of subordinate buildings. But the chief attraction is the mansion itself; the main part of it was built in 1774, but it has been more than doubled in size since then, and now appears like a modern establishment. It stands upon the summit of a grassy lawn, is partly overshadowed by a stupendous elm, and is completely surrounded with a piazza. The ground floor alone contains no less than nine handsomely furnished rooms, all opening into each other, the largest and most westerly one being a Gothic library. Pictures, pieces of statuary, choice engravings, and curiosities of every description, are displayed in the greatest profusion, and the feminine taste everywhere manifested gives a peculiar interest to the whole establishment. Among the more prominent art attractions are portraits of Mr. WEBSTER, by Stuart and Healey; one of Lord Ashburton, by Healey; one of Judge Story, by Harding; portraits of Fletcher Webster and wife; one of the late Edward Webster; a Roman Girl, by Alexander; Cattle pieces, by Fisher; marble busts of Mr. Webster himself and of Mr. Prescott, and a bust and very beautiful crayon drawing of "Julia," the late Mrs. Appleton. The last mentioned portrait took a most powerful hold upon the writer's imagination from the moment he first beheld it; and this impression was greatly strengthened by discovering that the spirit of this departed daughter, and most lovely, gifted, and accomplished woman, seemed to pervade the entire dwelling, where she had been the joy of many hearts. To her was Mr. WEBSTER indebted for his library, as it now appears, for it was built after her own design; and a more delightful place, especially when Mr. WEBSTER is present, seated in his arm-chair, and in a talkative mood, could not be easily imagined. Mr. WEBSTER's entire collection of books has been valued at forty thousand dollars; but his law library is in Boston; his agricultural and natural history library in a small office building, situated in one corner of the Marshfield garden; while the miscellaneous library is alone collected in the Gothic library hall. But the works here collected are all of a standard and substantial character, as the following specimens will show; for here are to be found: Audubon's Birds of America; the Encyclopædia Britannica; the best editions of Bacon, Washington, and Franklin; all the dictionaries that were ever heard of; every thing good in the way of history and poetry, together with an extensive sprinkling of the old divines. And so much for a general description of Marshfield.

It has been decreed by Mr. WEBSTER that, after his death, his remains shall be deposited in a tomb on the soil of Marshfield; and such a receptacle has he already prepared for himself and family at a cost of at least

one thousand dollars. It occupies the summit of a commanding hill, overlooking the ocean and the site of the first church ever built in the town of Marshfield, and is enclosed with an iron paling. The writer visited this sacred spot in company with Mr. WEBSTER, and the only words that he uttered during the visit were uttered while pointing to the tomb and the green sward, and were as follows:

"This will be my home; and here, three monuments will soon be erected: one for the mother of my children; one, each, for Julia and Edward; and there will be plenty of room in front for the little ones that must follow them."

Of the many choice relics which adorn the mansion at Marshfield, there is not one that Mr. WEBSTER values more highly, or descants upon with more feeling and affection, than a small profile, cut in block and handsomely framed, which is thus described in his own writing:

"MY EXCELLENT MOTHER."

"D. W."

The likeness is that of a highly intellectual person, and bears a striking resemblance to Mr. WEBSTER.

Directly in front of Mr. WEBSTER's Marshfield mansion, in a sunny and pleasant locality, are two small elm trees, which were planted by the father to the memory of his children Julia and Edward. The ceremony of their planting was as follows: Mr. WEBSTER had been missing from his study for an hour, or more, when he suddenly made his appearance before his son Fletcher with two small trees and a shovel in his hand, and summoned his attendance. He then walked to the spot already designated, and, having dug the holes, and planted the trees without any assistance, he handed the shovel to Fletcher, and remarked, in a subdued voice, as he turned away, *"My son, protect these trees after I am gone: let them ever remind you of Julia and Edward."*

Those who know Mr. WEBSTER best say that he has been a changed man since the death of his children.

The oldest house now known to be standing on the soil of Massachusetts, is said to be the one originally built and occupied by several generations of the Winslow family, and this stands upon a lot comprehended in Mr. WEBSTER's farm. It is an aristocratic looking place, and though weather-beaten and worn, applications are frequently made to rent it, but the proprietor respects it for its antiquity and associations, and, with char-

acteristic taste, prefers to have it remain unoccupied—in a kind of poetic solitude.

Chief, in regard to age at any rate, among Mr. WEBSTER's retainers at Marshfield, is his friend Seth Peterson, whom he once mentioned in a speech as the author of an argument he had been uttering on the price of labor, and whom he designated as a "sometime farmer and sometime fisherman on the coast of Massachusetts." A stout, brawny, sensible, jovial man is this "Ancient Mariner of Marshfield," whose home, *par excellence*, is Mr. WEBSTER's beautiful yacht *Lapwing*. The twain have been boon companions for about twenty-five years; and the bays, and inlets, and headlands of Massachusetts bay, are as familiar to them both as the best fishing grounds are to one and the fields of learning to the other. And Seth Peterson is a good shot withall, and during the duck and snipe shooting season is the constant attendant of Mr. WEBSTER; as also when he occasionally goes forth into a belt of forest land, stretching parallel with the sea coast of Plymouth county, for the purpose of killing a deer, which feat is sometimes accomplished before a late breakfast hour. As Mr. WEBSTER is an early riser, he has a standing order, that when he is at Marshfield Seth Peterson shall have the very first interview with him, and while this is obeyed as a duty and considered a compliment, it results in a systematic arrangement for the day's sporting. The grace with which Mr. WEBSTER is in the habit of doing every thing, is as conspicuous in a fishing expedition, as at a dinner party, or a diplomatic interview. He has a decided eye for the picturesque in all things, but especially manifests it in his costume; and it is exceedingly pleasant to observe the kindness of heart which he invariably manifests, when, on returning to his fish-house from a morning excursion far out at sea, he proceeds to parcel out his cod-fish and mackerel or tautang to his rustic neighbors. But those who would be made fully acquainted with Mr. WEBSTER's many amiable qualities and his skill as a fisherman must consult Seth Peterson.

And, by the way, those who are in doubt as to the existence of a great sea-serpent may be pleased to know that the testimony of both Mr. WEBSTER and his skipper is on the side of the affirmative of this question. They both allege that they once saw some living animal answering to the popular description of this creature; and Mr. WEBSTER asserts that a drawing taken of a specimen in Plymouth bay, was pronounced by the naturalists of Boston as exactly corresponding with an animal found on the coast of Norway, near the great whirlpool, and delineated by *Tompoppi-dam* in his history of Norway.

The writer was once enjoying a morning walk with Mr. WEBSTER over

his Marshfield grounds, when we were joined by a Boston gentleman who came to pay his respects to Mr. W. Hardly had we proceeded a hundred yards, before a flock of quails ran across the road, when the stranger worked himself into an intense excitement and exclaimed, "O, if I only had a gun, I could easily kill the whole flock: have you not one in your house, sir?" Mr. WEBSTER very calmly replied that he had a number of guns, but that no man whatsoever was ever permitted to kill a quail or any other bird, a rabbit or a squirrel, on any of his property. He then went on to comment upon the *slaughtering* propensities of the American people; remarking that in this country there was an almost universal passion for killing and eating every wild animal that chanced to cross the pathway of man; while in England and other portions of Europe, these animals were kindly protected and valued for their companionship. "This is to me a great mystery," said he, "and so far as my influence extends, the birds shall be protected;" and just at this moment one of the quails already mentioned mounted a little knoll, and poured forth a few of its sweet and peculiar notes, when he continued, "there! does not that gush of song do the heart a thousand fold more good than could possibly be derived from the death of that beautiful bird?" The stranger thanked Mr. WEBSTER for his reproof, and subsequently informed the writer that this little incident had made him love the man whom he had before only admired as a statesman.

Among the choice relics which enrich the Marshfield library is the collection of thirteen silver medals, which were voted to General Washington by the old Congress, and which, long after his death, were purchased by Mr. WEBSTER of a branch of the Washington family. The reader will probably remember that these medals were offered to Congress with a view of having them deposited in the national library, and that a committee, of which the Hon. Edward Everett was chairman, strongly recommended their purchase at almost any price. Strange as it may seem, a heavy debate arose out of this proposition. Just at this time, it so happened that Mrs. Webster was deliberating about the purchase of a cashmere shawl, when Mr. WEBSTER suggested that she should, for the time being, go without the shawl, and that the money thus saved should be invested in the Washington medals. Mrs. Webster most joyfully assented, and in a very quiet way the medals were transferred into her possession. In the mean time, the conclave of wise men in the forum were debating the propriety of paying a trifling tribute to the memory of Washington; and, after exhausting their learning and about one week of their valuable time, they concluded to purchase the medals, and were dumbfounded to find them altogether beyond their reach.

It comes not within the province of the writer to describe these thirteen medals in detail; but, as he learned from Mr. WEBSTER that the *reverse side* of the principal one was partially designed by Washington himself, the following description is submitted:

Occasion.—Evacuation of Boston by the British troops.

Device.—The head of General Washington in profile.

Legend.—Georgio Washington, supremo duci exercitum ad-ertori libertatis cometia Americana.

Reverse.—Troops advancing towards a town which is seen at a distance; troops marching to the river; ships in view; General Washington in front, and mounted, with his staff, whose attention he is directing to the embarking enemy.

Legend.—Hostibus primo Fugatis.

Exerque.—Bostonium recuperatum 17 Martii, 1776.

When it is remembered that Mr. WEBSTER is considered the *greatest* intellectual character of America, it is a striking coincidence that he should have been born in the shadow, as it were, of Mount Washington, the most elevated in New England, and that his home should be, not only in full view of the landing place of the Pilgrim Fathers, but also on the margin of the Atlantic ocean; as if earth would commemorate his birth, history his deeds, and ocean claim the privilege of floating his name to the remotest nations of the world.

The poet, Park Benjamin, was once questioned as to the man whom he had in his mind's eye when he wrote the following very beautiful sonnet, entitled "*A great name*;" and his reply was, "DANIEL WEBSTER, of course!"

"Time! thou destroyest the relics of the past,
 And hidest all the foot-prints of thy march
 On shattered column and on crumbled arch,
 By moss and ivy growing green and fast.
 Hurl'd into fragments by the tempest blast
 The Rhodian monster lies: the obelisk
 That with sharp line divided the broad disc
 Of Egypt's sun, down to the sands was cast:
 And where these stood, no remnant trophy stands,
 And even the art is lost by which they rose;
 Thus with the monuments of other lands,
 The place that knew them, now no longer knows.
 Yet triumph not, O, Time; strong towers decay,
 But a *great name* shall never pass away!"

On one occasion, when Mr. WEBSTER was Secretary of State in 1841, he came home from the department, and, stepping into his front parlor,

took down from a mantle-piece a very beautifully ornamented basket, hung it upon his arm, and disappeared. In the course of half an hour he returned to the house and handed Mrs. Webster the said basket *full of eggs*. She was, of course, very much astonished at this development, on account of the inappropriate nature of the deed, and accordingly inquired the cause; when Mr. WEBSTER replied, that he had been all the morning discussing with the diplomatique corps the affairs of some half dozen of the principal kingdoms of the world, and, as he was fond of seeing both ends meet, he only wished to realize how it would seem for him, a Secretary of State, to turn from such imposing business to the opposite extreme, of purchasing, within the same hour, a basket of newly-laid eggs.

MR. WEBSTER'S attachment to the Bible has already been mentioned; indeed, he loves and he reads that priceless volume as it ought to be loved and read. He never makes a journey without carrying a copy with him; and the writer would testify that he never listened to the Story of the Savior, or heard one of the Prophecies of Isaiah, when it sounded so superbly eloquent as when coming from his lips. Those admitted to the intimacy of his conversation alone can tell of the eloquent fervor with which he speaks of the inspired writings; how much light he can throw on a difficult text; how much beauty lend to expressions that would escape all but the eye of genius; what new vigor he can give to the most earnest thought; and what elevation, even to sublimity.

It would be impossible for any one to listen half an hour to one of his dissertations on the Scriptures, and not believe in their inspiration, or *his*. And yet, while his private conversations and public productions attest how deeply he is imbued with the spirit of the Scriptures, neither the one nor the other ever contained the slightest irreverent allusion to any passage in them, anything in the way of illustration, analogy, or quotation, which would seem to question their sanctity. He has been scrupulously delicate in this regard, and therein differs widely from most of his contemporaries in public life; as he reads and admires the Bible for its eloquence, so does he venerate it for its sacredness.*

No man in the country is more fond of out-door recreations than Mr. WEBSTER. He has no taste or fondness for in-door amusements. He never played a game of chess, or checkers, or billiards, or ten pins, in his life; and it is said that he is equally ignorant of cards, unless it is

* March's Reminiscences of Congress.

whist, a game which he will play with ladies and gentlemen on a winter evening for an hour or so. To out-door sports he has always been addicted, and to this manly taste he is unquestionably indebted for the robust constitution of his manhood. In his childhood and youth he was far from robust; indeed, he was supposed to possess a feeble constitution. There are letters in existence written from one friend to another, in which it was frequently stated that young WEBSTER would be likely consigned to an early grave, for he appeared like one inclined to consumption.

Mr. WEBSTER has been heard to say that he never enjoys himself to such perfection, in any place whatsoever, as when spending a few weeks at midsummer upon his New Hampshire farm. The associations of his birthplace and boyhood seem to have an iron grasp upon his affections, which even the important duties and high aspirations of the Statesman cannot cloy or render insipid. And when here he visits, and is visited, by his sturdy and very worthy neighbors without any ceremony. Throughout the whole region is he spoken of as "*the Squire*," and while the nation and the world admire him for his intellect, his rustic friends love him for the goodness of his heart. Many call upon him simply to shake him by the hand and inquire after his health; some come to consult him on topics connected with agriculture; and others, in the simplicity of their hearts, think it perfectly proper to consult him in regard to their petty law suits; and he ever treats them, as a matter of course, with the utmost kindness, helping them out of their troubles "without money and without price." To those who have been in the habit of paying him retaining fees of five thousand dollars or more, such conduct on the part of Mr. WEBSTER must indeed appear strange.

There are very few men in this or any other country who possess the faculty of winning and keeping personal friends to as great an extent as Mr. WEBSTER. So simple and unpretending is he in his manners, and so kind hearted and affectionate, that those who are privileged to know him intimately, have their admiration greatly increased, and learn to love him with a devoted affection. That office seekers should entertain an opinion adverse to the above is not surprising, for his most devoted friends would not have the hardihood to assert that he has an unconquerable affection for this class of amiable gentlemen. On the contrary, he undoubtedly dislikes them, as would any other public man who had been bothered by them for nearly half a century. The truth is, he does not treat them often times with the severity they deserve, and there are a far greater number of instances to be mentioned, of his giving offices to poor men, than of his

turning the cold shoulder to those whose chief ambition was to cut a dash. He is beyond all question as much a man of feeling as he is a man of intellect, and the writer has yet to learn the name of the first man who ever knew Mr. WEBSTER and did not love him.

It has ever been his habit, on all proper occasions, to attend to the legitimate duties of his position, either as lawyer, as statesman, or diplomatist; but he has a rule of long standing, which prohibits the introduction, by his friends and neighbors, of all political topics, when visiting him in his retirement. When at Elms Farm, they may talk to him about the scenery, the legends, the history, the crops, and the trout of the Merrimac valley; and when at Marshfield they may talk about the ocean and its finny tribes, of all the manifold pleasures of agriculture, of literature, and the arts; but they must, if they would please him, keep silent on all the topics, without exception, which make mad the politicians of the day. Though it has been his fortune to figure extensively in the political history of the country, it is firmly believed that his affections have ever been far removed from all such vanities. The necessities of his country and his ideas of duty have alone made him a politician.

Mr. WEBSTER's sport of angling has given him many opportunities for composition; his famous address on Bunker Hill having been mostly planned out on *Marshpee brook*; and it is said that the following exclamation was first heard by a couple of huge trout, immediately on their being transferred to his fishing basket, as it subsequently was heard at Bunker Hill by many thousands of his fellow-citizens:—"Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives that you might behold this joyous day."

Among the subordinates of the State Department at the present time, (1851,) is a very worthy colored man named Charles Brown, who has been in Mr. WEBSTER's employment for about thirty years. Indeed, Mr. W. has never been in Washington for any length of time since he first entered Congress without having by his side this faithful servant. A few years ago it came to Mr. WEBSTER's knowledge that this servant had purchased a lot of ground and built him a comfortable house, whereupon he was questioned by Mr. W. as to his unexpected success.

"Where did you get the money to purchase so fine a house?" asked Mr. WEBSTER.

"I am glad to say, sir, that it all came out of your pocket," replied the man; "it is the money which you have given me on holidays and other occasions."

From this it would appear that his occasional free gifts were sufficient, in one instance, to make a man comfortable for life.

The following well authenticated fact was related to the writer by an eye witness, and is only a specimen of many that might be mentioned, tending to illustrate the character of Mr. WEBSTER's heart. Somewhere about the year 1826, a certain gentleman residing in Boston, was thrown into almost inextricable difficulties by the failure of a house for which he had become responsible to a large amount. He needed legal advice, and being disheartened, he desired the author of this anecdote to go with him and relate his condition to Mr. WEBSTER. The lawyer heard the story entirely through, advised his client what to do, and to do it immediately, and requested him to call again in a few days. After the gentlemen had left Mr. WEBSTER's office he came hurriedly to the door, called upon the gentlemen to stop a moment, and having approached them with his pocket book in hand, he thus addressed his client: "It seems to me, my good sir, if I understood your case rightly, you are entirely naked; is it so?"

The client replied that he was indeed penniless, and then of course expected a demand for a retaining fee. Instead of that demand, however, Mr. WEBSTER kindly remarked, as he handed the client a bill for *five hundred dollars*:

"Well, there, take that, it is all I have by me now. I wish it was more; and if you are ever able, you must pay it back again."

The client was overcome, and it may be well imagined that he has ever since been a "WEBSTER man." Surely a man who can command the admiration of the world by the efforts of his gigantic intellect, and also possesses the above self-sacrificing habit of making friends, must indeed be a great and a good man.

Those upon whom will hereafter devolve the duty of writing, in detail, the life of Mr. WEBSTER, will find a mine of intellectual wealth in his correspondence. The total number of letters that he has written is unusually great, even for a man of distinction, and though many of them are necessarily brief, a large proportion of them contain original opinions of peculiar value and interest. Since they have been addressed to persons in every sphere of life, from the lords and ladies of England, and the scholars, farmers, and merchants of our own country, to those in the humbler walks of life, in every State of the Union, their "subject themes" are of course manifold; but it will be found that they are all distinguished either for wisdom, wit, learning, beauty, or affection. Indeed, in the opinion of the writer, a more delightful book could not be imagined than

that would be, composed of a collection of Mr. WEBSTER's letters. And in this place it may do no harm to mention, that there are in existence several volumes of manuscript notes which were recorded by two ladies who were members of his household during his residence in England, and which are almost exclusively devoted to his observations and opinions, as casually expressed in a familiar manner.

Few men, who have ever figured at all, in the national legislature, have ever had as little to do with State Governments as Mr. WEBSTER; and it was in alluding to this fact that he once made the following remarks, while upon a visit to the city of Syracuse:

“It has so happened, that all the public services which I have rendered in the world, in my day and generation, have been connected with the General Government. I think I ought to make an exception. I was ten days a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, (laughter,) and I turned my thoughts to the search of some good object in which I could be useful in that position; and, after much reflection, I introduced a bill which, with the general consent of both houses of the Massachusetts Legislature, passed into a law, and is now a law of the State, which enacts that no man in the State shall catch trout in any other manner than in the old way, with an ordinary hook and line. (Great laughter.) With that exception, I never was connected, for an hour, with any State Government, in my life. I never held office, high or low, under any State Government. Perhaps that was my misfortune.

“At the age of thirty, I was in New Hampshire, practising law, and had some clients. John Taylor Gilman, who, for fourteen years, was Governor of the State, thought that, a young man as I was, I might be fit to be an Attorney General of the State of New Hampshire, and he nominated me to the Council; and the Council taking it into their deep consideration, and not happening to be of the same politics as the Governor and myself, voted, three out of five, that I was not competent, and very likely they were right. (Laughter.) So, you see, gentlemen, I never gained promotion in any State Government.”

As Mr. WEBSTER has attained to his present prominent position chiefly by means of his own exertions, it is reasonable to conclude that he has been a hard working man. All who know him, know this to be a fact. Because he is a man of giant intellect, and has had to do with the greater national questions of the day, it has been supposed that his business habits were not plain and practical. This is a great mistake, and the writer will endeavor to prove the contrary, by sketching his habits while attending to his official duties as Secretary of State.

He is usually among the first at his post of duty in the department, and among the last to leave. The first business he attends to is to read his mail, and this he accomplishes in a short time, and after a peculiar manner. The only letters that he reads with attention are the official ones; and, where the questions they bring up do not require investigation, are generally disposed of immediately; all political letters are merely glanced at, and then filed away for future consideration; those of a private and personal character are also laid aside, to be attended to or answered early on the following morning at his residence; while everything of an anonymous character is simply opened, torn in two pieces, and committed to the basket of waste paper. The amount of business that he sometimes transacts during a single morning, may be guessed at when it is mentioned that he not unfrequently keeps two persons employed writing at his dictation at the same time; for, as he usually walks the floor on such occasions, he will give his chief clerk a sentence in one room to be incorporated in a diplomatic paper, and, marching to the room occupied by his private secretary, give him the skeleton, or perhaps the very language, of a private note or letter. In addition to all this, he makes it his business to grant an audience to all who may call upon him, receiving dignitaries with dignity, and all friends, strangers, and *even* office seekers, with kindness and cordiality; and, in this connexion, it may be well to state that those who make *short* visits are generally the most successful in attaining their ends, especially if said ends are "*their country's*," or OFFICE.

As touching his deportment towards his subordinates in office, it is invariably of the most agreeable character. It is his law that every man shall both know and do his duty; but he treats them all as if he knew them to be possessed of feelings as sensitive as his own. The consequence is, that every man in his department is a warm personal friend.

As Coleridge says of Southey, Mr. WEBSTER "possesses but is not possessed by his genius." No man ever had his powers more completely under command. At a moment's warning the vast stores of his mind are ready, and the most impromptu speech rolls from his tongue in perfect composition. He is always logical in conversation—this is his great characteristic; enchains the attention of every listener by the driest argument, and has a manner of the most singularly mixed grace and power. His eloquence, when he warms, is perfectly overpowering, and then he bursts out with a flow of poetry which would hardly be thought possible from the severe cast of his mind. Miss Martineau, who met him at a dinner party at the British legation at Washington, says, there is no merrier man. She describes him as leaning back at his ease on the sofa, shaking it with burst

after burst of laughter, telling stories, cracking jokes, or smoothly discoursing to the perfect felicity of the logical part of one's constitution. Such is his private boon companionship. Abroad, however, he is the stern, plain dressed, grave republican; and the common man who passes him in the street thinks he can read the cares and responsibilities of the whole United States' Government on his great brow.*

As a lawyer, pursuing his professional avocations in the judicial courts, and as a member of the Senate, he has ever formed a striking character. In the Supreme Court, where he has often plead before the judges, and in which many of those masterly forensic arguments were delivered that constitute a considerable portion of his published productions, he is described by an eye witness as sometimes standing firm as a rock, while listening to the Chief Justice delivering a judgment; his large cavernous eye wide awake, his lips compressed, and his whole countenance in that intent stillness which instantly fixes the eyes of the stranger. It was not uncommon for him to saunter into the court, throw himself down, and lean back against the table, while seeming to see nothing about him; and there was no knowing whether he would by-and-by go away, or whether he would rouse himself suddenly and stand up to address the judges. Still, however it might turn out, it was amusing to see how the court would fill after the entrance of Mr. WEBSTER, and empty when had he returned to the Senate Chamber. In his pleading, as in his speaking in the Senate, it was interesting to see one so dreamy and *nonchalant* roused into strange excitement. It was something to watch him moved with anxiety in the toil of intellectual conflict; to see his lips tremble, his nostrils expand, the perspiration start upon his brow; to hear his voice vary with emotion, and to trace the expression of laborious thought, while he paused for minutes together, to consider his notes and decide upon the arrangement of his argument.

In the Senate his services have always been acknowledged to be invaluable; he there displayed industry, energy, and sound-headedness. He spoke but seldom; but when he did so, it was generally on some constitutional question where his logical powers and legal knowledge were brought into play, and where his authority was considered oracular by assemblages of the first men in the country. When speaking to the Senate he invariably manifested great earnestness, and seemed to believe every sentiment he uttered, and he convinced by appealing to the reasoning powers of his listeners rather than to their passions. Before entering on the delivery of a

* The British and Foreign Review.

speech, on one occasion, he might be seen absent and thoughtful, making notes. When he rose, his voice was moderate and his manner quiet, with the slightest possible mixture of embarrassment; his right hand resting upon his desk, and the left hanging by his side. Before his first head was finished, however, his voice would rise so as to fill the chamber and ring again to the remotest corner; then he would fall back into his favorite attitude, with his left hand under his coat-skirt, and his right in full action. At this moment the eye would rest upon him as upon one inspired, seeing the invisible and grasping the impalpable. When the vision had passed away, the change was astonishing; he sat at his desk writing letters or dreaming, so that he did not always discover when the Senate was going into a division. Some one of his party had not seldom to jog his elbow, and tell him that his vote was wanted.*

Mr. WEBSTER once remarked to the writer that no man could become eminent in any profession, and especially in the law, without the hardest and most laborious study; and, whatever of genius may be awarded to him, it is certain that he is chiefly indebted to his own personal exertions for his present commanding position as an orator, a statesman, a jurist, and a man of letters. He has ever been in the habit of performing all his duties, official and private, like a downright business man; indeed, the entire story of his life proves him to have been at all times a practical man. Twenty-five years ago, for example, he was acknowledged to be one of the most, if not *the* most, efficient laborer in the useful and arduous toils of the Congressional committee rooms, and of practical legislation; and the country is indebted to him for not a few of the important improvements in our laws. The most remarkable, is probably the Crimes act of 1825, which, in twenty-six sections, did so much for the criminal code of the country. The whole subject, when he approached it, was full of difficulties and deficiencies. The law in relation to it remained substantially on the foundation of the act of 1790; and that, though deserving praise as a first attempt to meet the wants of the country, was entirely unsuited to its condition, and deficient in many important particulars. Its defects were immense and manifold; but Mr. WEBSTER's act, which, as a just tribute to his exertions, bears his name, cures all those defects, and alone gives him the title of a humane benefactor of mankind. It is said, that no man at that time but Mr. WEBSTER, who, in addition to his patient habits of labor in the committee room, possessed the general confidence of the House, and had a persevering address and

* Martineau's Society in America.

promptitude in answering objections, could have succeeded in so signal an undertaking.

The admirable head and powerful form of Mr. WEBSTER make him everywhere conspicuous; the brow is ample; the eye deep sunk and dark, and seated immediately below the strongly marked and shaggy eyebrow; the features and contour denote, most expressively, the strength of every mental faculty—reflection, judgment, memory, analysis, all are there; the countenance in repose sometimes becomes absent and thoughtful, and has the expression of an inward employment of the reasoning powers, independent of all the external objects, and for the time wholly forgetful of their presence; and then, as if the mental exercise had resulted in the most undoubted conviction, the whole becomes radiant with intelligence and animation. The contrast and transition of expression are very fine. His busts represent him more fully than his portraits.*

The style of Mr. WEBSTER'S English, pure, and bold, and massive, is moulded by severe and classic taste, to convey the conception of a mind of vast proportions. In the knowledge and comprehension of all subjects connected with the sciences of law and government he is a master, and has attained the distinguished appellation of "Expounder and Defender of the Constitution."*

"What little I have accomplished," Mr. WEBSTER once said, "has been done early in the morning." Like nearly all those men who now occupy a prominent position before the world, he has been, and is, an early riser. If on either of his farms, he literally rises with the lark, and goes forth to enjoy the quiet companionship of his cattle; and if in the city, he is up before the sun, and among the first visitors to the market, where he not only attends to the necessary duty of supplying his table, but also enjoys the conversation of the various rural characters whom he meets there, and with whom it is his pleasure to be on intimate terms. As his habit of early rising and going to market is known, many citizens, who have not otherwise an opportunity of seeing him, embrace these morning occasions of meeting him.

The time intervening between his morning walk and the hour of breakfast is always devoted to business, to the writing of letters, marking out *patches* for foreign governments, or unravelling the knotty political questions of the day.

The great charm of Mr. WEBSTER'S speeches is the ardent patriotism

*Maury's Statesmen of America.

and devotion to liberty that pervade them; a patriotism, not of a fanatical, but universal character; not hating other countries from love of native soil; but radiating from home a feeling of charity and good-will upon all mankind; a devotion to liberty as far removed from licentiousness as tyranny; liberty inseparable from virtue, from public and private morals; that imposes checks upon itself, and guards against the abuse of its own power. It is this which gives to his works their wide-spread popularity. It is this which has acclimated them everywhere. It is this which has carried the English language further than English arms have ever done; to regions of thick-ribbed ice, where day and night make one sad division of the year; to the utmost isles of the sea, and lands beyond the solar road.*

Among the items of piscatorial information which have dropped from the lips of Mr. WEBSTER, are the following: When he was a boy, the imperial salmon, as well as shad, annually visited the Merrimac river in immense numbers; and among the discoveries that he then made was this, that while the latter fish invariably and exclusively ascended the Winnipiseogee, the former never failed to continue their journey farther up the Merrimac. It often happened, too, that they left the tide water in company, but as surely as they approached their parting place, they parted in masses, and were soon as widely removed from each other as honest politicians are from fanatical abolitionists. The discovery in question prompted investigation, when it was found that the temperature of the two streams was very different; for while one of them was rather warm and ran out of the great Lake Winnipiseogee, the other flowed from the ice-cold springs of the White Mountain; and the further fact was ascertained, that while the shad preferred to cast its spawn in deep and quiet waters, the salmon accomplished the same end in the most shallow and rapid streams among the hills.

Mr. WEBSTER also once mentioned to the writer the following circumstances of a kindred character. In speaking of the blue-fish, (the tailor of Chesapeake bay,) he said that its favorite food at the north was the moss-bunker or bony herring, and that it was one of the very few fish which *masticate* their food instead of swallowing it whole; and hence it is that their line of travel is usually designated by an oily scum which covers the water when a school is swimming by. This scum is designated by the fishermen as a *slick*, and when one of them is seen upon the surface of the ocean the fisherman is certain of getting into a school of blue fish, and of course enjoys fine sport.

* March's Reminiscences of Congress.

In speaking of the tautang or black fish, he also mentioned the singular circumstance, that it was within his recollection when this fish was entirely unknown in Massachusetts bay, though abundant there at the present time; and the writer knows from experience that it is not taken as far south as Chesapeake bay, excepting once and a while, one in the harbor of Charleston, whose ancestors were taken there a few years ago by way of experiment.

On one occasion, (when first Secretary of State, but at home on a brief visit,) he happened to be out fishing for mackerel in his smack, off Marshfield. The fish were abundant, and there was quite a number of local fishermen on the ground. While the sport was at its height, however, Mr. WEBSTER discovered in the offing, rapidly approaching, what he supposed to be a stranger sail. He questioned Seth Peterson in regard to the matter, and was convinced that his *suspensions* and *fears* were correct; whereupon he impatiently demanded in what direction, with the present wind, the smack could sail the fastest? The reply was, "with her eye towards Halifax;" when Mr. WEBSTER exclaimed, "Its a hard case, Skipper, but press forward with all speed, for the master of yonder vessel is evidently an *office seeker*."

The truth was, there lived a man in the neighboring town of Scituate who had for months past been bothering him for an appointment, so that the fears of the Secretary were well grounded.

Forty years ago a journey from Washington city to New England was an important undertaking, and during the early spring months almost an impossibility. The consequence was, that, at the adjournment of Congress, a party of members from the north would sometimes club together, and, chartering a comfortable vessel, return home by water. Of such a party was Mr. WEBSTER a member in the spring of 1812, and, though they anticipated a tedious voyage, he was the only individual who had the sagacity to take with him a collection of books. Of all those who profited by these books, there was one honorable gentleman who was more famous for his much speaking than for his wisdom, and in this particular not unlike some of his successors of the present day. The first book that he lighted upon was *Gulliver's Travels*, and in this he was so intensely interested as to read it through a number of times at the expense occasionally of sweet sleep and warm dinners: and, when he returned the volume, he thanked Mr. WEBSTER for the use thereof, told him it was one of the most interesting books he had ever read, and then added, "*Do you really believe, sir, that it is an authentic record?*" "As a matter of

course," replied Mr. WEBSTER, "since it is distinguished for its remarkable *minuteness*."

Many years ago, when Mr. WEBSTER was travelling through the State of Ohio, accompanied by a friend, he chanced to stumble upon a jovial party of Buckeye farmers who were enjoying the sport of a turkey shooting match. Having pulled up his horses, for the purpose of satisfying his curiosity, he was invited to try his hand, and accepted the offer. He selected what he thought one of the best rifles, examined it with the air of a good shot, raised it to his eye, and sent a bullet directly through the centre of the target. The biggest of the turkeys was immediately presented to him, and then the Buckeye gentlemen worked themselves into a state of excitement as to who the stranger marksman could be. They invited him to partake of a dinner with them at the adjoining tavern, and he assented. While at the table Mr. WEBSTER's friend thought it his duty to introduce the "great unknown" to the company; and, having done so, what was their astonishment to learn that he was the same man who had delivered a famous speech in Congress. He of course gratified his newly-made friends by addressing them a few appropriate remarks; and, when he continued his journey, they accompanied him on the way a distance of twenty miles. And they tried hard, too, to induce him to make another of his "crack shots;" but he was, of course, too sagacious to run the risk of losing his recently acquired reputation.

A writer in the *Virginia Advocate*, who happened to hear Mr. WEBSTER's speech in reply to Colonel Hayne, thus uniquely chronicled his opinion of the orator:

"He was a totally different thing from any public speaker I ever heard. I sometimes felt as if I were looking at a mammoth treading, at an equable and stately pace, his native cane brake; and, without apparent consciousness, crushing obstacles which nature had never designed as impediments to him."

On one occasion in 1834, just as Mr. WEBSTER had risen in his seat to present a memorial to the Senate, a person seated in the gallery, and having the appearance of a preacher, suddenly shouted out: "My friends, the country is on the brink of destruction. Be sure that you act on correct principles. I warn you to act as your consciences may approve. God is looking down upon you, and if you act upon correct principles you will get safely through." As soon as he had made an end of this brief oration he very leisurely stepped back, and made his way out of the gal-

lery before the officers of the house had time to reach him. The president and Senate were all surprised, and it was some time before the usual tranquility was restored. During the commotion Mr. WEBSTER had remained standing, and the first sentence that he uttered was this: "*As the gentleman in the gallery has concluded, I will proceed with my remarks.*"

When Mr. WEBSTER was at the Capon Springs, the yeomanry of that portion of Virginia came a distance of fifty miles to shake him by the hand; one old revolutionary soldier having *walked* no less than fifteen miles; and it is said that when he concluded the address there delivered, an old man went towards him with tottering steps, and having put his arms around him, exclaimed: "God bless you, for you are the greatest and best man in the world."

The following circumstance is a somewhat remarkable instance of the effect of Mr. WEBSTER's eloquence. There had been a constitutional question pending between the Charlestown and Warren bridges, which connect the city of Boston with the main land, and Mr. WEBSTER had delivered an argument in favor of the former, when the price of the shares thereof immediately rose from two hundred to twelve hundred dollars, while those of the other went down to a most ruinous extent.

A gentleman of Nantucket once accosted a friend by saying: "I have wished to see you for some days; for I am in trouble, and wish your friendly advice." "What can it be," replied the other. "Why, I have a lawsuit, and *Webster* is opposed to me; what shall I do?" "My advice is," was the answer, "that your only chance of escape is to send to Smyrna and *import a young earthquake.*"

When Mr. WEBSTER was in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1847, he concluded a brief speech in the following manner:

"Gentlemen, allow me to tell you of an incident. At Raleigh, a gentleman purposing to call on me, asked his son, a little lad, if he did not wish to go and see Mr. WEBSTER. The boy answered, 'Is it that Mr. WEBSTER who made the spelling book, and sets me so many hard lessons; if so, I never want to see him as long as I live.'"

"Now, gentlemen, I am that Mr. WEBSTER, who hold sentiments, on some subject, not altogether acceptable, I am sorry to say, to some portions of the South. But I set no lessons. I make no spelling-books. If I spell out some portions of the Constitution of the United States in a

manner different from that practised by others, I readily concede, nevertheless, to all others a right to disclaim my spelling, and adopt an orthography more suitable to their own opinions, leaving all to that general public judgment to which we must, in the end, all submit." And when he took his seat the following toast was submitted: "Here's to the agreeable schoolmaster—who sets no lessons."

At the time that Col. Hayne made his attack upon Mr. WEBSTER in the Senate, that paragon of a man and political-writer, *Joseph Gales*, esq., happened to be present. Hearing that Mr. WEBSTER intended to reply, and would probably be quite brief, he resolved to try his hand, for this particular occasion, at his long-neglected vocation of short-hand reporter. He undertook the task, but finding that the "reply" was likely to occupy a number of hours instead of some thirty minutes, the magnitude of the labor that it would be to write out his notes appeared so formidable that he shrunk from it as an impossibility, with the many engagements that demanded his attention. The friends of Mr. WEBSTER urged upon Mr. Gales the imperative necessity of writing out the speech, but the prospect was gloomy, when suddenly an intimation was received from Mrs. Gales, (who had in former years been in the habit of assisting her husband in elaborating his reports) that she would do all in her power to write out the speech in full. The result was, that in the course of a week a copy was presented to Mr. WEBSTER in the handwriting of Mrs. Gales, and when published in the *National Intelligencer* had an unprecedented circulation. The original notes, adorned with a few unimportant alterations in the handwriting of Mr. WEBSTER himself, were subsequently neatly bound in a volume, and now constitute one of the attractions of Mr. Gales' private library. And the writer of this paragraph has been informed by Mr. Gales that the superb speech in question was far more brilliant and impressive in its delivery than it now appears upon paper.

In the great argumentative conflict between Mr. WEBSTER and Colonel Hayne, the latter complained of the former's assault upon him instead of Colonel Benton, who had preceded him in the debate, and who was the originator of the controversy. Mr. WEBSTER, who had never thought proper before that time to notice Colonel Benton in debate, replied to Colonel Hayne, "that it was a matter of no consequence who was the drawer, he had found a responsible endorser, and he chose to look to him."

At a dinner party a few evenings thereafter, Mr. WEBSTER and Mr. Preston, of South Carolina, (Hayne's successor in the Senate,) happened to be placed opposite to each other at table, and were indulging in sportive

conversation, when, (in reference to something Mr. WEBSTER playfully addressed to a lady beside him,) Mr. Preston observed to Mr. WEBSTER, "I will maintain any thing the lady asserts." Mr. WEBSTER replied, "that he should require no endorser for the lady." "And yet," rejoined Mr. Preston, "I have known you to resort to an endorser in preference to a drawer." The allusion was manifest, and though appreciated for its wit, was more highly thought of as evidencing the elevated tone of feeling which could render subservient to purposes of social pleasure, even the sharpest weapons of political warfare.

On the evening following the delivery of the reply to Colonel Hayne there was a reception at the White House, and the rival champions happening to be present on the occasion, were of course the lions. The East-room was crowded to excess, and while Mr. WEBSTER stood at one end, chatting with his friends, apparently but little exhausted by the exertion of the day, severe as it had been, the flush of excitement still lingering upon his noble countenance, Colonel Hayne stood at the other, receiving the congratulations of his friends, and bearing himself like a southern gentleman, as he was in every particular, and as if the idea of being numbered with the vanquished had never entered his mind. With others he went up to compliment Mr. WEBSTER on his brilliant effort, but before he had a chance to speak the former accosted him with his usual courtesy; "How are you this evening, Colonel Hayne?" To which the Colonel replied good humoredly, "*none the better for you, sir!*"

Portraits and busts of Mr. WEBSTER have been executed almost without number, but no artist has had better opportunities of representing him, or has succeeded more completely, than Mr. Healey. His picture of the United States Senate Chamber, as it appeared during the delivery of the famous reply to Colonel Hayne, is a production of great merit and value, and in every particular a worthy representation of the memorable scene. The subject was indeed a passive one, and did not admit of any display of merely physical action, but the interest was that of pure intellect and matter of fact patriotism, wherein it differed materially from what are generally termed historical paintings. It is however an historical picture of a high order, for it contains veritable portraits of one hundred and thirty persons, a large proportion of whom are distinguished American statesmen; while the remainder are composed of some of the chief literary men of the country, and a few of the ladies who adorned the society of Washington city at the time of the great debate. In the centre of this truly splendid audience stands Mr. WEBSTER, noble beyond compare in mere

stature, but with a flood of the most elevated thoughts beaming from his countenance. He stands directly in front of the President of the Senate, (Mr. Calhoun,) but instead of looking at him, at his antagonist, (Colonel Hayne,) or at the audience, he seems to be in a momentary trance, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, as if marshalling his thoughts for this burst of eloquence:

“While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise. God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind. When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, beligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last, feeble, and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured; bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, *What is all this worth!* Nor those other words of delusion and folly, *Liberty first, and Union afterwards*; but everywhere spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, **LIBERTY AND UNION, NOW AND FOREVER, ONE AND INSEPERABLE!**”

Mr. Healey's picture is the result of many laborious years, and he may congratulate himself with the reflection, that he has not only produced a work of decided excellence in itself, both as a gallery of portraits, but as an historical picture, and one also which will increase in value continually.

When he first formed the purpose of painting this picture, he was engaged in executing a series of portraits of the Presidents of the United States, and other distinguished American statesmen, under a commission from the late King of the French, who desired to add them to the great historical collection in the Royal museum of Versailles. Mr. Healey was also subsequently engaged in painting the portraits of historical personages in England, for the same patron and the same destination, at which time he was kindly permitted to suspend this commission, in order that he might repair to America, and paint from life the likenesses introduced in the large picture. Before he could resume his labors in England, the revolution of 1848 terminated the Royal commission; but he returned to

France with the fruit of his studies and labors in this country, that he might be able to mature the composition and complete the execution of his great picture, with the advantage of constant reference to the productions of the old masters, and in the spring of 1851 the work was completed.

A sanctimonious lady once called upon Mr. WEBSTER, in Washington, with a long and pitiful story about her misfortunes and poverty, and asked him for a donation of money to defray her expenses to her home in a western city. He listened with all the patience he could manage, expressed his surprise that she should have called upon him for money simply because he was an officer of the Government, and that, too, when she was a total stranger to him, reprimanded her in very plain language for her improper conduct, and *handed her a note of fifty dollars.*

The following characteristic anecdote is related of Mr. WEBSTER, and is said to have occurred when he was much engaged in the Senate, and at a period of great excitement in the councils of the nation.

He had called upon the cashier of the bank where he kept an account, for the purpose of getting a draft discounted, when that gentleman expressed some surprise, and casually inquired why he wanted so much money? "To spend; to buy bread and meat," replied Mr. WEBSTER, a little annoyed at this speech.

"But," returned the cashier, "you already have upon deposit in the bank no less than three thousand dollars, and I was only wondering why you wanted so much money."

This was indeed the truth, but Mr. WEBSTER had forgotten it; in devoting his mind to the interests of his country, he had forgotten his own.

Those who have blamed, or may blame, Mr. WEBSTER for his occasional apparent indifference to the questions which agitate the public mind, will do well to remember that his motto is, that

"Some questions will improve by keeping."

His whole career as a statesman and a diplomatist has illustrated the wisdom of this course of conduct, and indeed, it is the only one upon which a solid and permanent reputation can be built. The history and present position of the journal known as the *National Intelligencer*, constitute another prominent illustration of the truth of the motto.

It is undoubtedly a fact beyond dispute, that no American has been more frequently entertained at complimentary dinners, during the last half century, than Mr. WEBSTER, and it has occurred to the writer that his read-

ers might be pleased to peruse the following toasts or sentiments. They are selected from a large number of similar character, and may be considered as fairly echoing the opinions of the public in regard to their distinguished subject:

Charleston.

Our Guest. He has a heart big enough to comprehend his whole country—a head wise enough to discern her best interests; we cheer him on his way to view her in all her various aspects; well assured, that the more he sees of her, the better he will like her.

Concord.

Daniel Webster. A workingman of the first order. New Hampshire rejoiced in the promise of the youth; his country now glories in the performance of the man.

Boston.

Our distinguished Guest. Worthy the noblest homage which freemen can give, or a freeman receive—the homage of their hearts.

New York.

Our Guest, Daniel Webster. To his talents we owe a most triumphant vindication of the great principles of the Constitution.

Baltimore.

Daniel Webster. His countrymen award him the proudest honors of statesmanship, and the Republic has recorded his services on the enduring pillars of her Union.

Baltimore.

His country will never forget that his fame has extended her own amongst the nations of the world.

Capon Springs.

Daniel Webster, our distinguished Guest. The jurist and statesman, who has illustrated the glory of our country. The champion of the Constitution and the Union, who has sown the seed of constitutional liberty broadcast over the civilized world.

Cincinnati.

The Constitution of the United States. Ambiguous and obscure only to the ambitious and corrupt; when assailed by such, may there ever be found among the people a DANIEL who can interpret the writing. He may be cast among lions, as many as you please; but even there, will he be found the master spirit.

Bangor.

Daniel Webster. The pride of his country and the glory of human nature.

Hallowell.

Our distinguished Guest. The Granite State has the honor of his birth, the Bay State of his residence, but to the Federal Union belongs his services and talents.

Hallowell.

The Granite State. She has well deserved the name, since she has produced a mighty rock, our only defence against general corruption.

Albany.

The Constitution of the United States and Daniel Webster, inseparable now, and inseparable in the records of time and eternity.

Annapolis.

Daniel Webster. Maryland shows her attachment to the Union by honoring its ablest defender.

Syracuse.

The Constitution and its greatest expounder; the Union and its ablest defender.

New York.

The State of Massachusetts honored in a citizen who is received with the acclamations of the world.

Cincinnati.

(The following was sent to a dinner-party by a lady.)

Daniel Webster—

“Westward the eastern star has bent its way,
May more than empire bless its cloudless ray.”*

Considered merely as literary productions, Mr. WEBSTER'S speeches and forensic arguments take the highest rank among the best productions of the American intellect. They are also thoroughly national in their spirit and tone, and full of principles, arguments, and appeals, which come directly home to the hearts and understandings of the great body of the people. They contain the results of a long life of mental labor employed in the service of the country. They give evidence of a complete familiarity with the spirit and workings of our institutions, and breathe the bracing air of a healthy and invigorating patriotism. They are replete with that true wisdom which is slowly gathered from the exercise of a strong and comprehensive intellect on the complicated concerns of daily life and duty. They display qualities of mind and style which would give them a high place in any literature, even if the subjects discussed were less interesting and important; and they show, also, a strength of personal character, superior to irresolution and fear, capable of bearing up against the most determined opposition, and uniting to the utmost boldness in thought the utmost intrepidity in action. In all the characteristics of

* Journals of the day.

great literary performances, they are fully equal to many works which have stood the test of ages, and baffled the skill of criticism. Still, though read and quoted by every body, though continually appealed to as authorities, though considered as the products of the most capacious understanding in the country, few seem inclined to consider the high rank they hold in our literature, or their claims among the greatest works which the human intellect has produced during the last fifty years.

* * * * *

They have an interest and value apart from the time and occasion of their delivery, for they are storehouses of thought and knowledge. The speaker descends to no rhetorical tricks and shifts; he indulges in no parade of ornament. A self-sustained intellectual weight is impressed on every page. He rarely confounds the processes of reason and imagination, even in those popular discourses intended to operate on large assemblies. He betrays no appetite for applause, no desire to win attention by the brisk life and momentary sparkle of flashing declamation. Earnestness, solidity of judgment, elevation of sentiment, broad and generous views of national policy, and a massive strength of expression, characterize all his works. We feel, in reading them, that he is a man of principle, not a man of expedients; that he never adopts opinions without subjecting them to stern tests, and that he recedes from them only at the bidding of reason and experience. He never seems to be playing a part, but always acting a life.

The ponderous strength of his powers strike us not more forcibly than the broad individuality of the man. Were we unacquainted with the history of his life, we could almost infer it from his works. Every thing in his productions indicate the character of a person who has struggled fiercely against obstacles, who has developed his faculties by strenuous labor, who has been disciplined in the affairs of the world. There is a manly simplicity and clearness in his mind, and a rugged energy in his feelings, which preserve him from all the affectations of literature and society. He is great by original constitution. What nature originally gave to him, nature has to some extent developed, strengthened, and stamped with her own signature. We never consider him as a mere debater, a mere scholar, or a mere statesman; but as a strong, sturdy, earnest man. The school and the college could not fashion him into any foreign shape, because they worked on materials too hard to yield easily to conventional moulds.

The impression of power we obtain from WEBSTER'S productions—a power not merely of the brain, but of the heart and physical temperament, a power resulting from the mental and bodily constitution of the whole

man—is the source of his hold upon our respect and admiration. We feel, that under any circumstances, in any condition of social life, and at almost any period of time, his great capacity would have been felt and acknowledged. He does not appear, like many eminent men, to be more peculiarly calculated for his own age than for any other; to possess faculties and dispositions which might have rusted in obscurity, had circumstances been also propitious. We are sure that as an old baron of the feudal time, as an early settler of New England, as a pioneer in the western forests, he would have been a Warwick, a Standish, a Boon. His childhood was passed in a small country village, where the means of education were scanty, and at a period when the country was rent with civil dissensions. A large majority of those who are called educated men have been surrounded by all the implements and processes of instruction; but WEBSTER won his education by battling against difficulties. “A dwarf behind a steam engine can remove mountains; but no dwarf can hew them down with a pickaxe; and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.” Every step in that long journey, by which the son of the New Hampshire farmer has obtained the highest rank in social and political life, has been one of strenuous effort. The space is crowded with incident, and tells of obstacles sturdily met and fairly overthrown. His life and his writings seem to bear testimony that he can perform whatever he strenuously attempts. His words never seem disproportioned to his strength. Indeed, he rather gives the impression, that he has powers and impulses in reserve, to be employed when the occasion for their exercise may arise. In many of his speeches, not especially pervaded by passion, we perceive strength indeed, but “strength half-leaning on his own right arm.” He has never yet been placed in circumstances where the full might of his nature, in all its depth of understanding, fiery vehemence of sensibility, and adamant strength of will, have been brought to bear on any one object, and strained to their utmost. We have referred to WEBSTER’s productions as being eminently national. Every one familiar with them will bear us out in the statement. In fact, the most hurried glance at his life would prove, that, surrounded as he has been from his youth with American influences, it could hardly be otherwise. His earliest recollections must extend nearly to the feelings and incidents of the revolution. His whole life since that period has been passed in the country of his birth, and his fame and honors are all closely connected with American feelings and institutions. His works all refer to the history, the policy, the laws, the government, the social life, and the destiny of his own land. They bear little resemblance in their tone and spirit to productions of the same class on the other side of the Atlantic. They have come from the heart and the understanding of one into whose very nature

the life of his country has passed. Without taking into view the influences to which his youth and early manhood were subjected, so well calculated to inspire a love for the very soil of his nativity, and to mould his mind into accordance with what is best and noblest in the spirit of our institutions, his position has been such as to lead him to survey objects from an American point of view. His patriotism has become part of his being. Deny him that, and you deny the authorship of his works. It has prompted many of the most majestic flights of his eloquence. It has given intensity to his purposes, and lent the richest glow to his genius. It has made his eloquence a language of the heart, felt and understood over every portion of the land it consecrates. On Plymouth Rock, on Bunker's Hill, at Mount Vernon, by the tombs of Hamilton and Adams, and Jefferson and Jay, we are reminded of DANIEL WEBSTER. He has done what no national poet has yet succeeded in doing—associated his own great genius with all in our country's history and scenery; which makes us rejoice that we are Americans. He has made the dead past a living present. Over all those events in our history which are historical, he has cast the hues of strong feeling and vivid imagination. He cannot stand on one spot of ground, hallowed by liberty or religion, without being filled by the genius of the place; he cannot mention a name, consecrated by self-devotion and patriotism, without doing it eloquent homage. Seeing clearly, and feeling deeply, he makes us see and feel with him.*

A Quaker gentleman of Nantucket once called upon Mr. WEBSTER, at his office in Boston, for the purpose of securing his services in a suit which was about to be tried on the Island, and wound up his appeal by demanding his terms.

“I will attend to your case for one thousand dollars,” replied Mr. WEBSTER.

The client demurred, but finding that the lawyer would not visit Nantucket for a less amount than the one specified, he promised to pay the proposed fee, provided Mr. WEBSTER would agree “to attend to any other matters that he might present during the sitting of the court,” to which Mr. WEBSTER consented.

The appointed time arrived, and Mr. WEBSTER was at his post. The leading case of his client was brought forward, argued, and decided in his favor. Another case was taken up, and the Quaker assigned it to the care of Mr. WEBSTER, when it was satisfactorily disposed of; another still, and with the same result; and still another, and another, until Mr. WEBSTER became impatient and demanded an explanation; whereupon the client remarked:

“I hired thee to attend to all the business of the court, and thou hast done it handsomely: so here is thy money, one thousand dollars.”

The best of Mr. WEBSTER'S speeches have been acknowledged to be the soundest exposition of Constitutional law ever given to the country. As Mr. Marsh has written, they constitute a chart of Government. And, as in the ancient days of Rome, the magistrates, whenever danger pressed the eternal city, consulted the Sybilline books, to know what measure of safety to pursue; so, under our Government, with us, and with posterity, these inspired productions of his great mind, in times of peril to the Constitution and the Union, will ever be resorted to as the only hope or means of preservation. By their saving guidance, THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION, “one and inseparable,” may survive every storm, and ride victorious through every gale.

Attachment to the Union of the States has amounted with Mr. WEBSTER to a passion. It was his earliest love, and will endure to his latest breath. In whatever situation he has been placed, it has filled his heart and controlled his conduct. He has made everything, in public life, subsidiary to this. It has grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength, till it has become a part of his moral being.

The past is security for the future; no matter how much his motives may be arraigned, his conduct vilified, or his personal feelings outraged, he will maintain, steadfast and unshaken, his devotion to the Constitution and the Union. He will neither forego nor qualify that ardent devotion at the instigation of angry clamor, or be diverted a hair's breadth from his consistent course, by the frowns or smiles of power, whether centered in one man or the million. He knows no change. He takes no step backwards; whatever denunciation or whatever blandishments surround him, he will be true, whoever else is faithless. As well might we expect the NORTH STAR—in all time, that unsubsidized guide to the mariner—to withhold his light and refuse to shine, because the needle, with fickle polarity, inclines to some other luminary.

“I am,” he says now, as he said before, “where I have ever been, and ever mean to be. Standing on the platform of the general Constitution—a platform broad enough, and firm enough, to uphold every interest of the whole country—I shall still be found. Entrusted with some part in the administration of that Constitution, I intend to act in its spirit, and in the spirit of those who framed it. I would act as if our fathers who formed it for us, and who bequeathed it to us, were looking on me—as if I could see their venerable forms bending down to behold us from the abodes above. I would act, too, as if the eye of posterity was gazing on me.

“Standing thus, as in the full gaze of our ancestors and our posterity,

having received this inheritance from the former, to be transmitted to the latter, and feeling that, if I am formed for any good, in my day and generation, it is for the good of the whole country, no local policy or local feeling, no temporary impulse, shall induce me to yield my foothold on the Constitution and the Union.

"I came into public life in the service of the United States. On that broad altar, my earliest, and all my public vows, have been made. I propose to serve no other master. So far as depends on any agency of mine, they shall continue United States; united in interest and affection; united in everything in regard to which the Constitution has decreed their union; united in war, for the common defence, the common renown, and the common glory; and united, compacted, knit firmly together, in peace, for the common prosperity and happiness of ourselves and our children."

WEBSTER.

BY MISS ANNE C. LYNCH.

"When I and all those that hear me shall have gone to our last homes, and when the mould may have gathered on our memories, as it will on our tombs."—*Webster's Speech in the Senate, July, 1850.*

The mould upon thy memory! No,
Not while one note is rung,
Of those divine, immortal songs
Milton and Shakspeare sung;—
Not till the night of years enshrouds
The Anglo-Saxon tongue.

No! let the flood of Time roll on,
And men and empires die;—
Genius enthroned on lofty heights
Can its dread course defy,
And here on earth can claim the gift
Of immortality:

Can save from that Lethean tide
That sweeps so dark along,
A people's name;—a people's fame
To future time prolong,
As Troy still lives and only lives
In Homer's deathless song.

What though to buried Nineveh
The traveller may come,
And roll away the stone that hides
That long forgotten tomb;—
He questions its mute past in vain;
Its oracles are dumb.

What though he stand where Balbec stood
Gigantic in its pride;
No voice comes o'er that silent waste,
Lone, desolate, and wide;—
They had no bard, no orator,
No statesman,—and they died.

They lived their little span of life,
They lived and died in vain;—
They sank ingloriously beneath
Oblivion's silent reign,
As sank beneath the Dead Sea wave
The Cities of the Plain.

But for those famed, immortal lands,
Greece and imperial Rome,
Where Genius left its shining mark,
And found its chosen home,
All eloquent with mind they speak,
Wood, wave, and crumbling dome.

The honeyed words of Plato still
Float on the echoing air.
The thunders of Demosthenes
Ægean waters bear,
And the pilgrim to the Forum hears
The voice of Tully there.

And thus thy memory shall live,
And thus thy fame resound,
While far-off future ages roll
Their solemn cycle round,
And make this wide, this fair New World,
An ancient classic ground.

Then with our Country's glorious name
Thine own shall be entwined;
Within the Senate's pillared hall
Thine image shall be shined;
And on the nation's Law shall gleam
Light from thy giant mind.

Our proudest monuments no more
May rise to meet the sky,
The stately Capitol o'erthrown,
Low in the dust may lie;
But mind, sublime above the wreck,
Immortal—cannot die.

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